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STUDENT REACTION TO SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

by

CHRISTINE MAYOR

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Second Language programs across North America, are not, in general, the wide success that teachers would like them to be. Students have failed to show an interest for second-language study and culture. However, in a future in which the only thing that is certain is change itself, skills of social and cultural communication will be a necessity and can be a major contribution of the second-language class. The imperative is then for the second-language profession to convert these arguments into valuable programs which will consider what the teachers want to offer as well as what the students want and need.

The purpose of this study was therefore to examine the needs and interests of the adolescent learners currently enrolled in a second-language class. More specifically it focused on five areas of concern: 1) the second-language learners, 2) their general attitudes toward second-language learning, 3) the various skills they are interested in acquiring, 4) the second-language learners' feelings about different aspects of the instructional process, 5) their rationale for studying a second-language.

Two hundred and four junior high school students enrolled in nine grade nine classes, under the jurisdiction of the Edmonton Public School Board, participated in the study.

The students were divided into three groups. The first two groups were comprised of students registered in two different French options (Extended-French and French as-a-second-language). The third group had students registered in another option (Drama, Art, etc...). Each student received a questionnaire: questionnaire A for the students in the French options, questionnaire B for the non-French students. Frequency counts and proportions were obtained for each item of the questionnaires, tabulated and analyzed.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the study:

1. The students' language background, although varied, does not seem to be a factor in determining students' registration or not in a second-language class.
2. Second-language learners are, for the majority, girls.
3. The students' feelings towards second language learning are generally positive. However, they believe that enrolling in a second-language class should remain an option.
4. The students feel that a variety of second-languages, other than French, should be offered in schools.
5. Speaking and reading are the skills that the majority of students are interested in.
6. There is a lack of consensus among students regarding the study of culture and the role of grammar.

7. Students view proper grammar and pronunciation as important tools for communication.
8. Students very strongly emphasize language-as-a-code over language-in-culture.
9. Students agree that variety, relevancy and oral communication should be present to a greater degree in their classrooms.
10. Students are learning a second-language for travelling, for their own enjoyment and for future job consideration.

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Chapter I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

> "We pass the word around, we ponder how the case is put by different people . . . we change our minds, we reach an understanding. Society evolves this way, not by shouting each other down, but by the unique capacity of unique individual beings to comprehend each other." (Lewis Thomas, 1979:120)

As teachers we are forced to admit that our efforts at making students want to comprehend other people's languages or other cultures have not exactly been a spectacular success. While the teaching of second languages in the public schools now encompasses languages not taught a generation ago such as Russian, Arabic, Mandarin, Hebrew, the study of second languages in high school or junior high is nonetheless declining as stated by the authors of Action for the '80s: A Political, Professional, and Public Program for Foreign Language Education (1981). Less than 20 % of the total secondary school population in the United States is studying a second language at any given time and figures in Canada are not far behind with the possible exception of immersion programs. At present and across the United States, there is approximately a fifty per cent loss of students between the first and second levels of language study. Programs are simply not conforming either to teachers' claims or students' expectations (Robinson, 1981). Students appear to be

turned off by the programs they experience. They have been attracted by promises of an ability to communicate in the language and an awareness of culture, and they have received, in most cases, tests and texts that require almost exclusively written, and some spoken, responses. In classrooms, second language learning has been separated from the cultural and social bases out of which the language grows. In short, the program has not been rewarding for the students; it has created neither a sense of accomplishment, nor a challenge to their talents and abilities, nor has it been manageable in its content. In many jurisdictions in North-America the curriculum has been designed by the "experts" and has been, at large, thought of in terms of one approach and one prototype course (Rivers, 1981). Although there is a great variety among the French programs now approved for use in Alberta, the scientific and technical approach paradigm to curriculum planning (or Tylerian rationale) is still being emphasized in the majority of these programs.

> "I think there are reasons for believing that in the near future there may be a resurgence of interest in at least some modern languages . . ." (Edgerton, 1980:222).

The decade of the eighties has given second language teachers some cause for rejoicing. The basis for this optimism is the gradual recognition in the public at large that we must educate students to deal with the world and its prob-

lems, particularly the challenge of accelerating technological and social change. We must also sensitize them to the fact that these problems do not end at the shores of North America. Here in Canada the gradual move towards metrification, the entrenchment of language rights in the Constitution, the objectives developed for the Social Studies program in Alberta, similarly indicate this recognition. This slow opening up of the North American public towards the world is being translated in education into "a call to comprehend others and also to communicate clearly ourselves in the multilingual and multicultural societies which are coming into being all over the world" (Rivers, 1981 : 448). Global education, education for a changed future world seem to be recurring themes in North American education goals for the 80's.

In this perspective second language learning has an important role to play.

> "At a time when students are capable of understanding the global gestalt, are studying the intricate balances of nature and mankind . . . , and are firming up their philosophies of life, the foreign-language class can, and should, center attention on the role of the human being in an interdependent world. Language is the vehicle that carries us down the multilaned routes connecting people, all of whom are in motion. Language study can make the collisions of these by-ways meaningful rather than disastrous." (as reported by Rivers, 1979).

It is believed that a future in which the only thing that is certain is change itself, depends on skills of social and cultural communication. The language teacher can help develop these skills. Second language experience can make individuals deeply and genuinely respectful of other cultures and of the people who have been shaped by them and who are their bearers. A position of genuine respect and not of mere toleration can be developed and should be a major contribution of the second language class, that is, if the concepts of universal brotherhood and better international understanding are to be anything other than empty phrases and vain postures. (Edgerton, 1980).

Need for the Study

Now that the 80's seem to have opened on a brighter note for second language programs, it is time to develop a curriculum containing language experiences for the 80% of the population that has shied away from enrolling in them. The imperative is for the second language profession to convert the strong arguments for language study into successful programs that cannot be bandied around as "elitist" and/or "curriculum frill." (Martin, 1981).

In a novel <u>At Sunrise : The Rough Music</u> written by Llewellyn (1976) a land owner gives his foster son some advice as a

guiding light in times of changes. He tells him that every now and then, one must sit down, take notes, find out what the harvest will be, and then go "never blindly, always ready to change course, as a good navigator must, when he finds the map wrong." (Llewellyn, 1976). This statement could also be the second language teachers' guiding light. They cannot any longer expend all their energies on a very narrow concept of content (language-as-a-code, and literature in higher grades) but they must take the broader view of language as communication and culture and link it to the issues of global education.

Furthermore, consideration of the harvest in our times implies market research on the tastes of the consumers, not only what we think they need, but also what they want. As educators, we must strike a balance between the two if students are to be motivated to learn what we offer. One cannot make students learn what they do not want to learn. We must not think that we know but start finding out: who are our language learners? What do they want? "Students determine our course objectives. Our course objectives determine our content." "Why" cannot be established apart from "who" the particular students are and "what" their needs and wants are." (Rivers, 1976: 256-257)

All promotional efforts outside the classroom will be ineffective if the program is not relevant to the students in

the classroom itself (Rivers, 1981). It does not make sense to "sell" students on the idea of communication and then offer them a crash course in verb forms! Thus, if the elements which influence students to want to study a second language could be identified, the classroom situation could be modified to enhance this desire to learn. It would also permit the teacher to develop an understanding of the factors which promote a good teaching and learning atmosphere. This, in turn would foster a greater satisfaction and enrollment in the second language experience. Furthermore, curricular concerns could be addressed in terms of a communicative and reflective mode of action. Dialogue with others and reflection on our actions would replace imposition and manipulation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the needs and interests of the adolescent learners currently enrolled in second-language classes and to establish their rationale for studying a second-language. More specifically, answers are sought to the following questions:

1. Who are these second language learners enrolled in second-language classes in Edmonton?
2. What are their general attitudes toward second language learning?

3. What language skills are they more interested in?
4. What are their feelings about different aspects of the instructional process?
5. What are their rationales for studying a second language?

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions will apply:

1. Second language - refers to any language which is learned or acquired in the course of one's life, other than the mother tongue. Here, the distinction between foreign language (a language geographically removed) and second language (a language used in the learner's environment), (Stern, 1981) is not made.

2. To "know" a second language - to have reached the middle level as stated by Stern (1975) in the Gillan Report: "A working knowledge of French . . . a useful command of the language for reading, for listening to the radio and for talking to French speaking Canadians." It entails the knowledge of the code, how and when to use it as well as knowledge of the culture.

3. To learn a second language - is to attend to the language linguistically (phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon), communicatively (knowledge of how to say what to whom, when, where and why) and culturally. For this study, it will entail learning a language in the classroom setting.

4. Culture - refers to the customs or social heritage which provide patterns for living for a group of people. It is those general attitudes, views of life and specific manifestations of civilization that give a particular people its particular place in the world. Sapir (1924)

5. Global education - refers to the concept by which education is seen as developing in students an informed appreciation of the cultural bonds that are developing among all nations in the world, of the increasing economic interdependence of the politically separate areas and peoples, and finally of the emerging economic integration of the globe. (Abramowitz and Ferguson, 1981).

6. Curriculum - refers to the subject matter to be learned in an educational institution. Central to it is the setting of goals, generalizations, learning activities, and suggestions for evaluation: the Tylerian rationale.

7. Communicative Competence - refers to the intuitive use of the language for communication. It is the pedagogical approach which sees communication as an authentic direct experience which is deliberately built into the curriculum at a very early stage. It is a technique of language teaching (Savignon, 1972).

8. Immersion - refers to a program in which the language of instruction (French) is the target language to be learned almost always within the context of an English-speaking school. This language of instruction is the vehicle through which other subjects are taught.

9. Bilingual Classes - refers to classes beginning as early as kindergarten, in a language other than French and English. Fifty percent of the day may be used for instruction of subject content in that language.

10. English-as-a-second-language - refers to a program in which non-native speakers of English are learning English within a classroom setting. As in the immersion program the language of instruction is the target language to be learned and the vehicle through which other subjects are taught.

11. Extended-French - refers to a program offered by the Edmonton Public School Board to students at the elemen-

tary, junior high and senior high levels. At the junior high level (grades 7 to 9) it involves a minimum of 160 minutes per week divided approximately between instruction in the language (70%) and study of cultural units (30%), as well as the study of subject matter taught using French as the vehicle of communication.

12. French-as-a-second-language - refers to a program which in the Edmonton Public School System starts at the grade seven level. It is offered for approximately forty minutes per day and its focus is the language itself.

13. Bilingualism - refers to the ability to use two languages effectively in different contexts. The level of proficiency in each language is not necessarily equal.

Assumptions

1. Anyone can learn a second language (Carroll, 1963).

2. The classroom factor greatly outweighs the environment factor in influencing continuation in second language study. (Jakobovits, 1970).

3. Teachers' claims that to open the door to another culture, and that to understand other people's way of life

are automatic outcomes of second language instruction are false claims (Robinson, 1981).

4. Middle years (grades 7, 8, 9) are crucial years for attracting students in second language programs.

5. Not everyone needs to be bilingual, but everyone needs to learn a language.

Delimitations of the Study

1. No attempt is made in this study to determine the influence of language aptitude for learning a second language.

2. There is no formal evaluation of any particular second language teaching approach or style.

3. The study does not take into account the number of years of second language instruction at the elementary school, if any.

4. No attempt will be made in this study to obtain specific indications of the socio-economic status of each student.

5. This study is restricted to grade 9 students in the Extended French (X-French) program and in the French as a second language program (F.S.L.) in the Edmonton Public School System, as well as, grade 9 students not currently enrolled in a second language course.

6. There is no formal differentiation made between the Extended French program and the F.S.L. program.

7. This study does not deal with students in bilingual, immersion and English-as-a-second-language programs.

Limitations

1. In this study, second language programs or courses refer only to French as a second language (F.S.L.) and/or Extended French (X-French).

2. Since this study deals only with grade 9 students following clearly defined programs in the City of Edmonton, care should be taken in generalizing the results to other grades, jurisdictions and programs.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

Education in general and language education in particular renews itself and revitalizes its practice through questioning and self examination. One area of questioning which presents the educator with a challenge is second language learning and its focus: the learner. This challenge as seen by many language experts (Rivers, 1978, 1980; Altman, 1980; Myers, 1980; Stern, 1981) is the acceptance of the fact that in a school or university setting second language learning is frequently abandoned in anger and frustration after one or two years of study despite sustained efforts on the part of educators to change it. In the process, emphasis is put on the learners' "side of the story;" his characteristics which he brings to the learning process, as well as the educational treatment which he undergoes. The discovery of how the students perceive their own needs and what contributions they can make in meeting these needs is one important step in reducing anger and frustration (Rivers and Melville, 1981). Thus, it is "discovered" that there is not one pedagogical answer to the problems, only the answers of many individuals. Furthermore, current conditions and questions in education require that we, as educators, reflect on what we do when we choose certain activities and objectives

in a curriculum plan. A curriculum is a "value statement" (Griffin, 1979), and developing a rationale, the reason and purpose for the content and the treatment of that content, is the essential part of any curriculum planning (Macdonald, 1978).

Thus, this review of the literature wishes to explore three aspects of the second language challenge:

1. What is the importance of the students' affective variables: attitudes and motivation?
2. What is the classroom factor?
3. What is the "state of the art" in curriculum and second-language learning and teaching?

The Affective Variables

Attitudes

"I hate French . . . . Why do I have to learn a second language anyway! . . . These grammar rules are too hard . . ." How many times have we heard students bemoaning a curriculum and teaching methodologies they perceive to be irrelevant? They react to what they feel is a joyless experience by rebelling, by staying away from the classes, and by generally remaining unimpressed by many attempts at motivation carried out by their teachers. Attitude can be defined loosely as a feeling for or against, and in more specific terms as "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an

object or a situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner. It is the student's preference which governs his attitude." (Rokeach, 1981:12). As early as 1961, Lambert suggested that the attitudinal factor is one of the more important ones in second language success. This research has indicated that underlying the development of skills in mastering a second language are two independent factors - an intellectual capacity and an attitudinal orientation toward the other language group. Valette and Disick (1971) have developed a series of stages to deal with and identify students' opinions, feelings and attitudes, which is presented below: (Valette and Disick, 1971:17):

STAGE	INTERNAL BEHAVIOUR	EXTERNAL BEHAVIOR
1. Receptivity	Awareness	Attentiveness
2. Responsiveness	Tolerance	Interest, Enjoyment
3. Appreciation	Valuing	Involvement
4. Internalization	Conceptualization	Commitment
5. Characterizaton	Integration	Leadership

The impetus to start polling students on their attitudes toward second language study gained momentum when questions were raised as to why students were quitting language study, often at the end of the first level and/or electing not to enroll in a language class. This was the subject of an investigation at the University of Illinois in 1966, reported by Jakobovits (1968: 181-227). The results indicated that seventy-six percent of the students disapproved of the second language requirement and forty percent felt that second language study in college had actually been detrimental to them.

The 1970 Northeast Conference's theme and emphasis also highlighted the profession's desire for increased utilization of information concerning the learner factors. In the Report of the Conference two second language attitude questionnaires were included: one for students with previous second language training, and the other for students without such training. These two questionnaires are basically identical. Items on the scales may be categorized according to several broad areas: influences on the student which encourage him to or dissuade him from studying a second-language, comparisons of the ease or difficulty of studying a second language, the different types of skills preferred, and rationale for studying it.

The research of Gardner and Lambert (1972) represented systematic attempts to examine the effects of attitude on language learning. The most important aspect of these findings is that attitudes are group oriented. Success in language learning can be influenced by the attitude that the learner has toward the members of the cultural group whose language he is learning. Subsequent large scale studies on the relationship between attitude and language success were conducted by Oller and his collegues. (Oller, Hudson and Liu, 1977: Chiharra and Oller, 1978; Oller, Baca and Vigil, 1978). These studies yielded, for the most part, similar results: positive attitudes toward self, the native language group and the target language (second language) group enhance proficiency.

Various research studies have highlighted the importance of attitude as one of the factors contributing to success in second-language learning. Attitude is learned behavior, and, consequently, can be changed from negative to positive by activities and experiences which are perceived to be meaningful by the students. It might thus prevent students from quitting language study and encourage them to enroll in a second-language class.

Motivation

It seems clear that the second language learner benefits from positive attitudes and that negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and in all likelihood unsuccessful attainment of proficiency. Motivation is often seen as a major factor in the success or failure of virtually any complex task. Beginning with Thorndike's studies in 1932, there has been a close and continuous relationship between motivation and learning. It is easy to say that a second language learner will be successful with the proper motivation; but is it true? What is motivation? What are its components? How does one create, foster and maintain motivation?

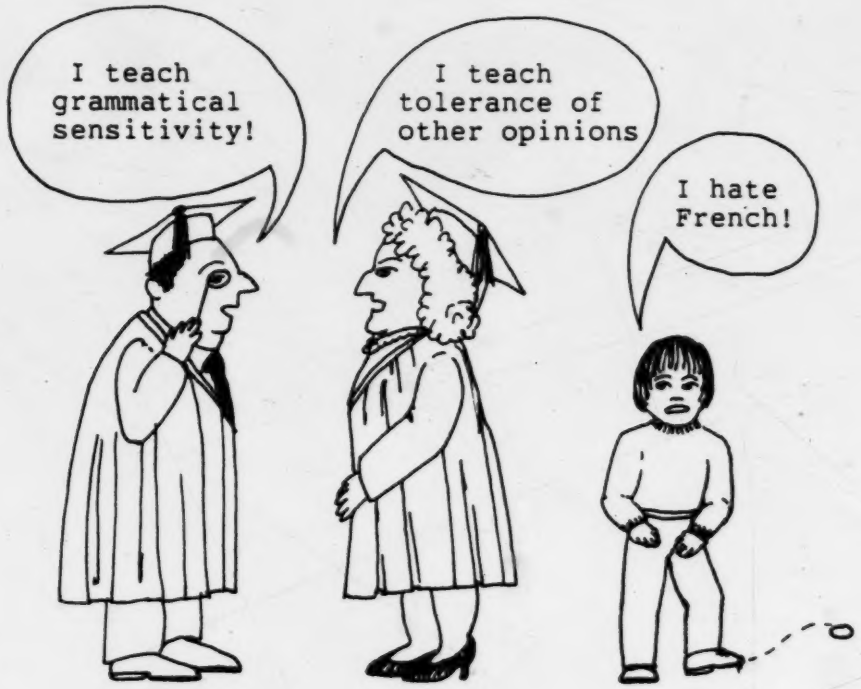
Commonly speaking, motivation is that which impels one to move, whether such impulse is conscious or unconscious. Motivation may be either extrinsic or intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation refers to those forces which are not inherent in the material being taught (e.g., the use of a film, rather than its content). This kind of motivation may be the source for developing the essential "intrinsic" motivation of a student. Lado (1964) indicates that the "urge to communicate" is a force that increases language learning. Carroll (1963) suggests that motivational factors will not make much difference in achievement as long as the learner remains "cooperative and actively engaged in learning" (Car-

roll, 1963:1060-1100). He establishes a difference between "being interested" and "being motivated" and reports that a person's likes or dislikes for second language study are unrelated to aptitude or achievement. "Motivation will be related to achievement only when it affects how well students will persevere in active learning efforts in a situation in which they are relatively free to lag in attention, as in Public schools" (Carroll, 1963:1068). However, this was not supported by one of the best known studies of motivation in second language learning which was carried by Gardner and Lambert (1972). They suggest that there are two classes of motivation for language learning: instrumental and integrative, and that the presence of the latter is necessary for successful mastery of the higher levels of proficiency signalled by "the development of a native-like accent" and the ability to "think like a native speaker". In general, the studies referring to this construct have established the presence or absence of integrative motivation by using an open-ended or multiple choice questionnaire, asking for the reasons why someone is learning the language in question. Reasons are considered instrumental if they suggest that the language is being used for purposes such as: to fulfill an education requirement, to get a better position, to read material in the language. They are considered integrative when they suggest the desire to become or relate to a member of the community speaking the language. Many of Lambert's studies and one study by Spol-

sky (1969) found that a high degree of integrative motivation was generally reflected in higher scores on proficiency tests in a second language.

In recent years, however, evidence has begun to accumulate which challenges such a claim and points out once more that there is no single best means of learning a second language: some students in some contexts are more successful in learning a language if they are integratively oriented and others, in different contexts might benefit from an instrumental orientation (Burstall et al., 1974; Oller et al., 1978). The new findings also indicate that the two types of motivation are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Most students are to be found somewhere along a continuum between instrumental and integrative motivation and additionally their position on this continuum can depend upon the social milieu the learner finds himself in as well as the ethnolinguistic vitality of the two groups (the native learner group and the second language group) (Stern and Cummins, 1981).

From these studies it is easy to conclude that second language learning is an emotional activity involving countless affective variables. Failure to take this into account may result in the situation as illustrated by the following cartoon. (Mager, 1968)!....



The Classroom Factor

"A classroom is an environment and . . . the way it is organized carries the burden of what people will learn from it . . . " (Postman and Weingartner, 1969:18)

Throughout the years, there has been much enthusiasm for educational improvement in general and for new approaches and methods in second language teaching in particular. However, from a survey of two hundred and sixty classrooms, Goodlad has concluded that "most of the so called educational reform movement has been blunted on the classroom door" (in Silberman, 1970;159). What Goodlad noted in 1969 is still valid in 1983. The fate of second language study

lies behind the classroom door. The classroom entails the interaction of, at the very least, three elements: the learner, the teacher, and the presentational design or method (Strevens, 1980:17-28), and this classroom interaction is of great importance to the learner. Schotta (1973) postulates that students drop courses in close relationship to which professor teaches the course. Rivers (1972) suggests that the personal involvement of the teacher is as important as the method of instruction. In a very interesting study which polls university students about language teaching, Walker (1973) summarizes positive teacher characteristics as reported by the students in the following manner. The best-liked teachers were "inspiring," "enthusiastic"; the least liked were "arrogant", "demanding", "poorly prepared", and "boring." Jakobovits (1970) claims that the classroom factor is one of the main elements involved in influencing continuation in second language study, particularly in an environment where instruction is likely to be the major or even the only source of second language input. Papalia (1970) found that second-language students dropped their study because:

1. The second and third levels of language were hard.
2. The student preferred another subject.
3. The student was not interested anymore.
4. He was advised by his counsellor not to continue.
5. He did not like the teacher.

Three of these reasons can be attributed to classroom factors. For Stern (1981) the educational treatment (objectives, content, strategies, curricula, and evaluation procedures) is of special importance and makes research on it all the more imperative. This importance comes from the fact that it can most readily be modified and adjusted to different social and language environments as well as individual learner factors. A study by Myers (1979) found that for American students learning a second language, components of motivation can be grouped into two factors: classroom and environmental. Classroom factors are defined as all aspects of student participation and experiences within the class (e.g. activities, reading, speaking, etc.). Environmental factors are the ones which are outside the student's personal language learning experiences (e.g., influences of teachers, parents, peers, etc.). This study of 400 secondary school students enrolled in a second language class found that the classroom factor clearly outweighs the environmental factor in influencing continuation in the study of the second language. This would mean that initial motivation prior to language study is important. However, once students have begun their language courses, motivation might decline and disappear all together. Valette (1980) wonders if the student's degree of motivation might not be a function of his/her success in the course. Stevick (1980) concurs with Valette and suggests that what goes on "inside and

between people in the classroom" is more important to success than materials, techniques and linguistic analysis.

From this brief overview of the literature it seems that interaction in the classroom is of prime importance because "there are many students today desirous of exploring another language and culture who are not finding in the classroom the opportunity and encouragement they need to pursue their exploration." (Savignon, 1976:296)

The Curriculum

Curriculum planning for second languages seems to have evolved in stages according to falling or rising enrollments. From the foundation of the Modern Language Association of America (MLA) in 1883 to the present day, second language teaching is a story of struggle and a slow process of change to convince the public and educators at large that modern languages belong in the classroom. Herron (1980) sees three cases or rationales which have been offered historically for second language instruction in the classroom. These rationales have been offered as legitimate reasons for studying a second language: the cognitive case, the utilitarian case, and the cultural case. Although she finds it difficult to build a case for language study solely on grounds of cognitive development or on utilitarian reasons,

she thinks that a case can be put forth in favor of second language study for all students if it is based on a cultural framework. Curriculum makers must also address themselves to the question of the validity of traditional arguments for studying a second language. Reinert (1972) thinks that it is dishonest to justify the place of second language in the curriculum in terms of "potential fringe benefits for a select few" (Reinert, 1972: 205-209) or in some way that can be interpreted solely in terms of dollars and cents. Our failure to give real reasons has led students to become disenchanted. Freeman (1971) states that "it is a great mistake to think merely of vocational usefulness" when promoting second language learning (Freeman, 1971:141-148). Rivers claims that foreign language study can contribute to a student's "quality of life, to his development of critical and moral judgement, to his ability to adapt and readapt to changing attidudes and circumstances" (Rivers, 1972:113-114).

In the same vein as Herron, Valdman (1978) sees the history of second language study marked by cyclical alternations between stress on communicative skills and emphasis on written and analytical skills, in a word, stress on the use of language as opposed to the study of its structure. As an example, from grammar, translation and reading (G.T.R.) we went to the audiolingual approach, then to the cognitive code approach, and finally to an emphasis on communicative

competence (language-in-context). Inspection of the professional journals nowadays reveals a high proportion of articles advocating the imparting of genuine communicative skills and proposing techniques to reach this goal even in the beginning levels of instruction.

Whether the stress is on communicative competence or grammar, much second language educational practice has been closely tied to the behaviorist/technological tradition. Lapan (1980) attempts to move away from this fairly common approach to instruction by proposing an alternative: "the dialectical paradigm" or "critical theory." This paradigm, first suggested by Macdonald, has for its goal praxis - action with critical thought, and its main concept is dialogue. According to this, the teacher must participate with students as the "first learner" and must be included as a major question in the study of the curriculum. For Lapan, the main advantage of the dialogic model is that its focus is "mutual productivity rather than an attempt to shape another" (Lapan, 1980:143-144). Furthermore, she suggests that teachers must resolve the dilemma between language as a logically organized body of content, subject to analysis, and language as a vehicle for the communication of ideas, feelings, information and the self.

The idea of an alternative paradigm is also addressed by Crawford Lange (1982). She states that at the level of cur-

riculum design two different designs offer distinct options to the teaching of second languages: the systems - behavioral and the problem-posing designs. The first one stresses "incremental learning and mastery learning" (Crawford Lange, 1982:87) and the second one has "an instructional and evaluative methodology derived from existentialist and phenomenological philosophy (Ibid.,p.88). The promise held by problem-posing education - whose major proponent is Paulo Freire, is that it puts culture "in the central position and understands language as a communicative tool expressive of that culture." (Ibid., p.88).

The professional literature cited in this chapter reveals that second-language educators have become seriously concerned with the learner; his characteristics, his needs and his wants. Since the early 1970's, some researchers have focused their attention on the affective dimension that the students bring to their classrooms. They have also indicated a change in emphasis in curriculum planning from a preoccupation with the content, to the view that second-language classes should be places where teachers and students dialogue about. As the second language profession continues to question its procedure and content, as it determines more accurately the influence of the various factors that distinguish successful from nonsuccessful language learners, as it continues to place central importance on the learner, the

goal of second-language programs for all students will become more and more a reality.

Chapter III

THE SAMPLE, THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE PROCEDURE

DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

Two hundred and four students enrolled in grade 9 classes in five Junior High Schools participated in the study. These Junior High Schools, under the jurisdiction of the Edmonton Public School Board (Alberta), were selected for participation according to the following criteria: they do not have a "special" second-language program (bilingual or immersion) and the combined student population of the five schools gives a fairly accurate picture of the general student population in Edmonton schools.

The students participating in the study are all grade nine students following the same core program but enrolled in three different option programs. The students are divided into nine classes. Approximately one-third (30%) of the total group of students is in an Extended-French program (X-French), one-third (33%) is in a French-as-a-Second Language (F.S.L.) program and the last third (37%) is not in any type of second-language program. These students are instead registered in another option (Drama, Art, etc.).

The Questionnaires

Two different questionnaires which are found in the appendices were given to the students according to their programs. Extended-French and F.S.L. students received the same questionnaire (questionnaire A). Non-French students received a shorter version (questionnaire B).

The Objectives of the Questionnaires

The main concern in designing the two questionnaires was to develop items which would answer the questions set out in the purpose of the study. To assist in the preparation of both questionnaires, informal discussions on students' perspectives were held with other teachers (teaching a second-language and not teaching a second-language) as well as with various groups of students, prior to the designing. Furthermore, to guide reflection, Leon A. Jakobovits' questionnaires prepared by him at the request of Committee I of the 1970 Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages:A Relevant Curriculum, An Instrument for Polling Student Opinion, were consulted. Then a 31 item (Questionnaire A) was developed as well as a 14 item (Questionnaire B). The items were derived from 5 areas of concern:

1. Who are the second-language learners?
2. What are the students' general attitudes toward second-language learning?

3. What language skills are they most interested in having?
4. What are their feelings about different aspects of the instructional process?
5. Why do they want to study a second-language?

It was felt that questionnaire A directed towards students actively involved with the study of a second-language would provide most of the answers to the above questions. However it was decided to include the grade 9s not following a second-language program because they could provide some valuable insights into second-language learning as well as point out the problem areas. Therefore a questionnaire B was drawn to poll these students who had dropped out of a second-language class or had never been in one. From the answers to the two questionnaires it was felt that a clearer picture of second language learners' needs and wants would emerge, as well as a better possibility to identify these elements which influence students to want to study a second-language.

Description of the Different Items

Questionnaire A, items 1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9,10, and questionnaire B, items 1,2,4,5 and 6, allow a focus on the learner himself and his family background. Students were asked to indicate the language (s) other than English spoken by themselves or various members of their family. It was felt that in a mul-

ti-cultural society like the one existing in Edmonton students would be exposed to a certain number of languages, if they didn't already speak one. This could modify to a certain extent their general attitudes towards second-language study by bringing in an element of relevance.

The second question to be answered deals with the area of attitudes (positive or negative) that the students have towards second-language learning. Questionnaire A items 11,13,14,17,18,20,21,22 attempt to assess students' liking for the second-language (item 11), their commitment to its study (items 13,17,18,20) and their commitment to learning more about its culture (item 14). This last item was judged to be an indication of students' sensitivity towards other people's culture.

Questionnaire B, item 12, assesses the degree to which non-French students could be committed to learn a second-language under different circumstances.

The third area of concern, considered in questionnaire A items 12,19, 25,27, deals with the language skills that students wish the most to acquire. This is of utmost importance to teachers since what happens in the classroom has the greatest influence on students' perceptions and attitudes. Within the classroom walls, teachers can build programs which are tailored to their clients' needs and wants

and thus have an effect on their attitudes. Item 12 is introduced to determine what types of activities the students are interested in: speaking, listening to the radio, watching T.V., reading or discovering the second-language peoples' way of life. Since a certain number of critics of second- language programs tend to believe that teachers are turning off students by insisting on "perfect" grammar or pronunciation and therefore requiring a great amount of drills or exercises, (Moskowitz, 1976; Rivers, 1981; Robinson, 1981; Knop, 1981) items 19,25,27 attempt to find out the students' feelings towards oral communication and quality of delivery.

Questionnaire B, items 9,10,13, give additional information on students' attitudes towards the skills they would be interested in acquiring, assuming that one day they might wish to take a second-language course (item 9). Item 10 in this questionnaire is different in that it asks for students' feelings about the study of the second-language culture. Non-French students, it was assumed, might not be interested in speaking, reading etc., in German, Spanish or French. However, they might be interested in learning more about a new culture. Item 13 is a variant of item 9 expressed in a more detailed manner.

The fourth area of concern, considered in questionnaire A items 23,24,26,28,29, is lengthy and deals with student sat-

isfaction or absence of it with different aspects of the second language class.

Item 23 asks students to agree or disagree with comments that are frequently heard in their classroom regarding second-language teaching. Item 24 asks students to indicate their satisfaction or non-satisfaction with various aspects of their course. Items 26 and 28 assess the degree to which each student would like to be personally involved with the content and method of specific courses, one of them being the second- language. It was felt that students should have a greater say and take on more responsibilities for what they are learning. In turn this would lead to more personal satisfaction. Item 29 tried to determine students' awareness of the target culture and its importance in their study of a second-language. In many classes in North America if not all of them, culture teaching and language teaching have been separated and language-as-a-code has been emphasized at the expense of language-in-culture. Thus effective communication has been reduced because "Culture represents communication and without culture there can be no communication." (Zintz, 1971:7)

Questionnaire B had no items dealing with this area of concern as students were not presently enrolled in a second-language course.

Questionnaire A, item 15, and questionnaire B, items 7 and 8, dealt with the last area of concern: students' rationale for studying or not studying a second-language in grade nine. It is a series of statements on the reasons and purposes they might have had to choose to register or not in a second-language class. Each of the items concludes by an open-ended question which asks students to list any other reasons they might think of.

Questionnaire A, items 16,30,31, do not fit precisely into any of the areas of concern. However they have been included in the discussion of the data. They yield some interesting information as to the "why" of some responses. Item 16 is somewhat related to general attitudes toward second-language learning. Students' own attitudes and perceptions have not been created in a vacuum. Significant people in their life (parents, neighbours, teachers, peers), all are influencial in shaping their beliefs. Items 30 and 31, the last items on the questionnaire, are open-ended statements which allow the students to reflect on their answers and feelings towards second-languages in general as well as participating in such a study.

Questionnaire B, items 11 and 14, attempt to yield the same type of information as the above.

The Procedure

The questionnaires were finalized after consultation with university professors in the field of second-language study as well as with consultants in second-languages for the Edmonton Public School Board. Once the questionnaires were established, permission was sought and obtained from the Research Division of the Edmonton Public School Board to conduct the study. The investigator met personally with the supervisor of second-language programs who advised her as to the selection of the five Junior High schools according to the two criteria decided upon previously (no special programs, immersion or bilingual, present in the school and the total number of students must be fairly representative of the general population of Edmonton). The principals of the schools and the teachers involved with the study were then contacted. Principals of the schools were given the questionnaires, teachers were not. All persons involved gave permission for the study to take place in their respective schools and classrooms. Preliminary contact took place by telephone with the teachers to arrange for a time when the questionnaires could be administered. Furthermore teachers were asked to explain to the students the purpose of the study and give them the possibility to refuse to participate if they so chose to. The teachers reported to the investigator that all students were in favour of being polled and

at the appointed date and time, the researcher visited the different classrooms. A total of two hundred and four students took part, distributed over nine classes. The smallest class had 14 students, the largest 33 students. There were three Extended-French classes, three F.S.L. and three non-French classes.

The study was administered over a two-week period in May 1983. Teachers were not present in the classroom at the time of administration. All questionnaires were completed over a 40 minute period. In addition to the written comments made on the questionnaires themselves, informal comments were made to the researcher by the students both before and after the administration of the questionnaire.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data was tabulated to obtain frequency counts and proportions for each item of the questionnaires. The items were then grouped according to the five areas of concern mentioned and described previously. The data is thus reported and discussed in terms of these five categories. All of the two hundred and four questionnaires were used for information as they were fully completed by the students.

The Second-Language Learners

Responses to questionnaire A items 1,2,5,6,7,8,9,10 are grouped under this sub-heading. A summary of the type of students enrolled in a second-language class is given in Table 1. The reader must be reminded, at this point, that in the context of this study, second-language class means French class (X-French and/or F.S.L.). Females outnumber males, respectively 64% and 36%. Their age ranges from 13 years old to 16 years old. Very few students belong to the two extremes (4%). The majority of them are 14 years old (69%) and there are a number of 15 year olds (27%). It is interesting to note that results from questionnaire B (non-French) items 1 and 2 yield slightly different data. Table

2 shows that the number of males (51%) and females (49%) are more or less equally distributed. Furthermore, students in this group are slightly older. There are more 15 and 16 year olds, respectively 33% and 8%; there are fewer 13 (1%) and 14 year olds (57%). These results seem to indicate that enrolling in a second-language class is indicative of a student doing better in class, if we associate "young" with "successful" at school, in general terms. Also, the number of girls who register in a second-language class might seem to suggest that girls prefer second-languages to other options available. It might also mean that Junior High girls perform, in general, better than boys and are more interested in subjects that are perceived as "academic."

Questionnaire A, items 5,6,7,8,9, focus on the students' language background. In a multicultural setting like the one existing in Edmonton, it was assumed that students would have very different language and cultural ties. This assumption was not proven wrong as Table 3 shows the number and variety of languages spoken at home, by the students or by members of their family. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents mentioned that either one of their parents or both spoke a language other than English, and twenty-three percent indicated that they themselves speak a language other than English and/or French. Furthermore, thirty percent stated that a language other than English and/or French is spoken at home, not necessarily by the students but by older

members of the family, relatives and neighbours. Of all the various languages mentioned, German happens to be the most spoken by the parents (20%), followed surprisingly enough, by French (17%) and Ukrainian (9%). Dutch is spoken by 6% of the parents, Spanish and Chinese, each by 5%. As far as the students themselves are concerned, only six percent of them speak German, one percent Ukrainian, three percent Chinese, three per cent Spanish and two percent Dutch. Item 8, asked the students to list the language(s) spoken in the home, not necessarily by the students. German is the language that the greatest number of students indicated (6%). Spanish is spoken by 5% of the families, Chinese by 4%, Dutch by 4% and Ukrainian by 3%.

From this information, it is worth noticing that the number of students who speak German and list it as being spoken at home, is the same (6%). However for all other languages, the number of students actually speaking the languages is small in comparison with the number of students who list them as being spoken at home. Although quite a few students are exposed to a language other than English in their personal life, few actively participate in them. Second-languages surround them as stated by 86% of the students who indicated that they know somebody, other than the language teacher, who can speak a language other than English (Table 4).

Students' perceptions of their performance in French are summarized in Table 5. In grade 9, students are well able to judge themselves and rate their performance at school. Students enrolled in a second-language option are "good" to "excellent" students in the second-language. It is worth pointing out that thirty percent of the students rated their marks in French as "excellent", twenty-nine percent at "very good", and thirty-four percent as "good". Only seven percent of the students rated their performance in French as "poor". This might indicate that students who do poorly in French have already left the program or it might indicate that, in general, non-achievers stay away from this option. Second-language classrooms might attract "good" students who do well in every academic aspect of school.

Responses to questionnaire B, items 4,5 and 6, suggest that non-French students are students who have never studied a second-language in school (49%) or students who have dropped out of a language class (47%) for whatever reasons. Some of them (29%) have been exposed to the study of a language other than English outside school. The languages most frequently cited are Ukrainian, German, Spanish and Chinese. Furthermore, these students, like the students enrolled in a second-language class, know personally quite a few people who speak a second-language (93%). These speakers of another language are ,for the major part, relatives (65%), neighbors (10%) and friends (6%). These findings, which can be

found in Table 6, are consistent with the previous ones and point out the varied language backgrounds of the students in Edmonton Public School Board classes, regardless of their programs. Thus, it can be stated that language background may not play a major role in helping a student decide whether or not to register in a second-language class.

Students' General Attitudes Toward Second-Language Learning

Table 7 gives an indication of students' global feelings towards the second-language studied. (This study deals only with French as it is the second-language offered in almost all Edmonton Junior High Schools at the moment). Feelings seem to be mixed. Thirty-four percent of the students polled stated that they like French very much, fifty-one percent said they like it "a bit" and six percent do not like it at all. Nine percent have no opinion on the subject, which is very surprising. Some degree of negative feelings was expected from the students in view of the general attitude and atmosphere in which second-language learning and particularly French learning is viewed in Alberta. However it must be pointed out that extremely negative comments did not appear. The relatively high number of "no opinion" can be explained by the fact that students might like one aspect of French, like reading or the teacher, and might not like another, like grammar and writing for exam-

ple. Thus, they might have been unsure as to how to respond. It should also be noted that students might not like French but would enjoy a German or a Spanish Class.

Questionnaire A, items 13 and 14, grouped in Table 8 assess the degree of students' committment and their willingness to avail themselves of the study of a second-language or another culture. Students did not overwhelmingly think that everybody should study a second-language. Forty-three percent said "yes" and thiry-six percent said "no". A large number of them also were undecided (21%). Furthermore, 30% of the students wrote "by choice" beside their answers. One can suggest several explanations for these findings. One of them is that a second-language is seen, by tradition, as an option and thus enrollment in it is a choice. Secondly, the study of a second-language within the confines of a classroom is often seen by the students as "useless"; just another subject to be learned. In fact, few students have the opportunity to speak this second-language in real life. Item 14 was geared more particularly towards one aspect of second-language learning/teaching which is not taught extensively by classroom practitioners, the study of other countries' culture (Tardif, 1978). Results showed that 61% of the students thought that everybody should study it, 26% said "no" and 12% did not know. A few (15%) wrote the words "also by choice" beside their answers. These results were surprising when one considers that culture is generally not

taught except for a few topics like customs, traditions, eating habits, etc... . Many teachers consider the teaching of culture as an aside, although part of the program for X-French, something to add, if time permits, to the teaching of the four skills. It is never or rarely an integral part of the second-language class (Parker, 1975; Tardif, 1978). Students, thus, do not really understand the meaning and the extent of the word "culture", and if they think they do, they are more likely to associate it with various customs, folkloric manifestations and other stereotyped approaches. Therefore, in light of second-language courses which heavily favour the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) this was, indeed a surprising result, surprising, but encouraging. With students' positive attitudes towards the study of other cultures, this should encourage teachers to bring into the classroom, challenging cultural materials which in turn would create even more positive responses.

Item 17, (questionnaire A) measures the ultimate degree of commitment towards learning a second-language: the willingness to go to another country or part of the country to increase one's skills in the use of this language. Going to a different country, leaving one's family and friends behind, means a willingness to take some risks. It also indicates that acquiring a second-language within the culture of its people is seen by the students as very valuable, of utmost importance in one's thinking. The results, shown

in Table 9, are somewhat surprising. Sixty-seven percent of the students stated yes, 14% said no and 19% were undecided. This last percentage is fairly high but understandable considering the age of the students. Generally speaking, students seem to enjoy the study of a second-language much more when it is associated with travel, than simply studied within the classroom walls.

Item 21 approaches the problem in a different manner. Here the situation is reversed. The student is in another country and has the choice of either making an effort to learn the language spoken or continuing to speak English. Table 10 indicates that students seem to prefer the first solution (76%). In general, students are aware of the fact that it is easier to learn a second-language immersed in its culture than in a classroom. They want to avail themselves of this opportunity. Getting along might not have been considered enough. It is important for teenagers to be "part of", to belong, and to speak the language of the people in whose country you live is seen as a way to be part of, to belong.

Table 11 deals with the enjoyment students get out of studying a second-language. This item is slightly different from item 11 in that it tries to get the students to think about a second-language in general terms and not just about the second-language they are studying presently (French). However, as the great majority of these students have not been

involved with the study of another language, it is assumed that unconsciously they will refer to French, and to the task of learning a language in a classroom as opposed to in a true life situation. Twenty-eight percent of the students found the study of a second-language "very enjoyable", 47% thought it was "slightly enjoyable". Seventeen percent said it was "not enjoyable" and 7% were undecided. More revealing than numbers then, were the comments, which could be divided into positive and negative. The negative comments were more numerous (55%) and ranged from criticisms of some areas of second-language instruction ("too much grammar", "not enough speaking", "too much useless information", "too much homework", "too slow", "too easy", "I hate my teacher" and "too many things to learn right away"), to lack of interest ("it's boring" - this comment was repeated 12 times) to a feeling of difficulty ("hard to learn", "I don't understand it", "too much effort for too few results"). The positive comments (29%) used phrases and expressions as "interesting" (repeated 17 times), "a challenge", "good for a job", "an adventure", "broaden knowledge", "good for travelling", "I like it because I am good at it", "French is nice to speak and listen to", and "it is self-rewarding to see one's progress".

Overall, students with negative comments expressed themselves very forcefully. The greater number of negative comments were related to some aspects of the instructional

process which are not understood and/or accepted by students. This could be altered and rendered more acceptable to the students. Very few comments were directed to hatred of French as such or the French people. It must also be stated that there would probably be complaints towards a math class or a science class. "Boring" is a frequently used term in grade nine students' vocabulary! The positive comments were general in terms. The students found the study of a second-language interesting or challenging, and they liked it for intrinsic reasons regardless of the instructional process. It's also interesting to note that only one student mentioned the comment "good for a job." These students were obviously more integratively motivated.

The item measuring the students' attitude towards the learning of a second-language other than French is dealt with in Table 12. Traditionally, French has been the second-language taught in Edmonton Junior High schools. It was assumed that some of the negative feelings associated with second-language learning might stem from the fact that students in Edmonton would prefer to study a second-language other than French, possibly as a result of their varied linguistic background. The results were not surprising as 73% indicated that "yes" they would like to learn a language other than French. Among the languages listed, German was the favorite (42%) followed by Spanish (20%), Latin (14%) and Ukrainian (8%). The high demand for Spanish might be

explained by the fact that with the political situation in Central and South America, students hear more about this part of the world, and there are more new immigrants coming from these troubled areas. As for Latin, it appears to be viewed by many students as the essential part of a "good" education.

Table 13 gives the students' assessment of whether the time they have spent in studying a second-language has been beneficial to them. This was a more general statement on the usefulness of a second-language. It appears that students found it beneficial (65%). However the number of undecided (26%) indicates that students might not be able to assess the exact meaning of the term "beneficial" or judge if it is beneficial.

Questionnaire B, item 12, which is the only item for the non-French students in this area of concern, addresses the question of students' commitment towards the study of a second-language, specifically the willingness to go to another country to acquire the skills necessary. As a result, a somewhat different set of perceptions emerges in Table 14. The number of the undecided has doubled (36%). The number of students who would be in favor of going has decreased to 47% and the number of students who would not like to go has increased to 17%. These differences, between the non-French group and the students enrolled in a French course are not

surprising. Non-French students are either students who at one time have dropped out of a language class or who have never been registered in one. One might assume that their experiences of a second-language may not have been very positive, and this is reflected in the results. However, the number of "no's" is not much higher than in the other group and the number of undecided point to the possibility of changing these negative experiences and perceptions.

To summarize the responses given to the questionnaire items dealing with the students' general attitudes toward second-language learning, it appears that the majority of them enters the classroom with a fairly good attitude. Studying a second-language might not be one of their priorities, but they are willing to commit themselves to it, especially if they feel it is relevant to their life and they have been willingly involved in the choice.

The Language Skills They Are Most Interested In Having

The skills that students enrolled in a second-language class would like to acquire the most are summarized in Tables 15, 16, 17 and 18. Language study within the classroom involves the acquisition of the four linguistic objectives (listening, speaking, reading and writing) with the inclusion of a cultural component for part of the teaching time. Table 15

indicates that speaking is the skill that arouses the greatest interest (51%). The imparting of genuine communicative skills is advocated nowadays in many professional journals, as well as the proposing of techniques to reach this goal. Thus, this skill has been emphasized by classroom teachers to a certain extent and speaking in the target language has been encouraged. It is worth noting that the rating "very little interest" in the speaking skill attracted the smallest amount of responses (7%). Regarding the high number of responses "some interest" (42%) it can be added that students might have hesitated checking this activity as "great interest" owing to the fact that in Alberta the opportunity to speak French is limited. Students are realistic; they know that opportunities to speak French with native speakers in Alberta is restricted.

Reading rated as the second most "popular" skill ("great interest" 47%, "some interest" 42%). Students in a French class are exposed to and have the opportunity to read a lot. Textbooks, readers, grammar and exercise booklets are all around them. The written word is the basis for second-language acquisition in a large number of classes. Furthermore, informal reading in the second-language has been encouraged through the use of comic books, magazines, short stories. Reading also has the second lowest responses for the rating "very little interest"(11%).

Students might have wanted to see films in French and undoubtedly would have enjoyed the experience. However, too often films in the classroom have been used as tools for learning and have come with a variety of activities attached to them (questions, tests, etc...). Therefore, the students associate this activity with work, and thus their enjoyment of it has been lost. They might also not feel knowledgeable enough in the language to view a film without frustration. It is, thus, not surprising that the category "some interest" had the most respondents (47%) and that the proportion of "great interest" and "very little interest" respectively decreased and increased in comparison with the other two skills. One possible solution to remedy the problem of language difficulty in films might be to "create" films with sound tracks of different levels of language difficulty.

The area of customs and way of life of the French people showed an equal distribution between "great interest" (26%) and "very little interest" (26%). Students' awareness of French culture is generally very poor. It has been said that the teaching of culture is not considered as an integral part of the second-language program. Overall, little classroom time is geared towards familiarizing students with the activities, accomplishments and customs of a Quebecois or a Frenchman. However, 48% of the students chose the rating "some interest" despite the fact that the teaching of

culture remains of peripheral importance in relation to the teaching of language. This is encouraging.

Listening to news broadcasts in French registered the lowest score in the rating "great interest" (19%) and the highest in the rating "very little interest"(47%). Grade 9 students do not often listen to the news in English, and it is not surprising that listening to it in a second-language seem even less appealing. This skill might have yielded better results if the phrasing of the sentence had read: "being able to listen to the French radio".

Table 16 deals with the area of speaking skills and communicative activities. Native-like fluency is seen by the students as necessary. Ninety-one percent of them wished they could speak a second-language like a native speaker. This statement is somewhat supported by the results on the following item (27) as shown in Table 17. Sixty-five percent of the students approved of the necessity for correct pronunciation and grammar in order to be able to communicate in that language. The emphasis on correctness of pronunciation and grammar is an important facet of the second-language class and it is reflected in the students' answers. A large amount of class time is devoted to the correction of "wrong" utterances. Rules and the "proper" way are emphasized. Students in grade nine are very conscious of the language as-a-code that one must crack. They are often led to

believe that mastery in the code only, leads to communication. They view language as a subject to be mastered like any other school subjects. However there is one aspect of language which is not stressed enough in the classroom. It is the how to say what, when, and to whom. This dilemma of many second-language teachers, following the textbook and the program with its emphasis on grammar or promoting communication, is reflected in the number of students who didn't know (44%) how to answer the question "would you like to be able to use the French language more to express your thoughts even if it meant speaking incorrectly?" Thirty-two percent said "yes", twenty-four percent said "no". (Table 18)

Table 19 summarizes the findings of questionnaire B, item 9, regarding the skills that students not presently enrolled in a second-language class might be interested in acquiring if they decided to register in a language class. The format of the question was slightly different from the format given to students enrolled in the French programs with the addition of a new rating "no interest" as well as a new skill "writing".

For the non-French students, speaking was the area that they chose as the most interesting for them. "Great interest" rated 40%, "some interest", 35%. It had the lowest score for the combined ratings of "very little interest" and "no

interest" (25%). Again, the obvious objective of language learning, which is communication, has been preferred by students

Surprising, though, was the fact that writing came second in popularity. Although, much less popular than speaking, the combined rating of "Great interest" and "Some interest" was 56%. However, it is important to note that the combined rating (44%) of "very little interest" and "no interest" was double that for speaking.

The proportions continued to decline with the third objective or skill chosen by the students. For "listening to the radio" and "watching T.V.", it was 53% of the students showing "some interest" or "great interest" versus 46% indicating "very little interest" or "no interest".

For reading, it was 51% vs 49%. The only skill which scored more in the combined ratings of "very little interest" and "no interest" was "understanding the way of life of the people speaking that language" (57%). Forty-three percent of the students indicated "great interest" or "some interest". Like the grade nine students registered in second-language courses, non-French students are "unidimentional" in their viewing of other people's cultures and beliefs. Furthermore, they have not made the connection between language and culture. They do not understand that true communication

will be restricted if only the linguistic aspects of the language are attended to. Although the cultural content in second-language teaching has been increased lately in many official programs, it still has not been taught in an explicit way. The problem may be that many teachers feel inadequate in their knowledge of the second language culture. They may also not have been adequately trained in the teaching of culture.

The results of item 10 (Table 20) emphasize this tendency to divorce the linguistic objectives from the cultural component. Very few students (12%) would take a course in which almost all of the time would be spent on the study of the second-language culture, even in English. On the contrary, thirty-six percent of the students would not take it. The amount of undecided soared to fifty-two percent, perhaps an indication of the difficulty for students in assessing the term "culture".

Table 21 summarizes the findings on how students not enrolled in a second-language class define "knowing a language". Again the aural-oral aspect of the language scored the highest. Eighty-one percent of the students marked "understanding what people tell you in that language".

Sixty-three percent indicated speaking it "perfectly well" as the best meaning of "knowing a second-language". It is

very surprising to note that only 28% of the students chose the item "to be able to speak it even if you make mistakes". The tendency of the students to rate mastery and native-like fluency (good pronunciation and grammar) is consistent with the ratings given to this item by the French group. Perfection or at least good delivery is emphasized in classrooms in the English language as well as in a second-language.

Reading and writing reasonably well rated exceptionally high with the students, being marked by 79% of them. Again, literacy is emphasized at school both in the first and second-language. This is also drilled into the students by the media and the public at large who periodically bemoan the fact that students cannot read and write properly nowadays. In view of the outcry towards "back to basics" (reading and writing) the score of the grammar item had to be high. Sixty-one percent of the students agreed with this emphasis on good delivery. As far as the accent was concerned, a "perfect" accent was not judged to be as important. Only twenty-nine percent of them defined "knowing a second-language" as having a perfect pronunciation. It is assumed that accents, although very noticeable, do not harm communication as much as faulty grammar, in the students' perceptions.

When asked to mark the three items of "knowing a language" related to culture, students ranked it in the anthropologi-

cal sense, ie., as a study of the daily lives of the people, first (35%). Ranked second was "to have lived in the country where the people speak that language for a period of time (32%). Then, came the definition of culture in the civilisational sense ie., as a study of the outstanding achievements of the people in the field of literature, architecture, ideas, art and music (15%).

Overall, students associated the knowing of a language with the know-how (speaking, listening, writing and reading). The whole area of culture is not well-known and thus ignored. This tendency is consistent with both groups.

Students' Feelings About Different Aspects Of the Instructional Process

A summary of the students' responses to items 23,24,26,28 and 29 are given in Tables 22,23,24,25 and 26. These items deal with the fourth area of concern: the instructional process and the students' feelings about it. The picture which emerges regarding what is happening in a second-language class is presented in Table 22. First of all, the pacing of the instruction seems to be tailored to the students' needs. Seventy-one percent of the students didn't think that the teacher went too fast. Seventy-two percent did not think they learn too much material everyday. On the

topic of oral communication, students felt that learning how to pronounce words correctly is very important (88%). They also thought that the types of sentences they are learning are useful for a conversation with a native person of the second-language (57%). However, in this area, the number of students who did not know (17%) is not far away from the number of students who did not agree (26%). There was strong agreement in the area of development of writing skills. Seventy-two percent of the students felt that the second- language course is very good for helping them learn how to write it. The high score in this classroom activity indicates that one of the main activities in the language classroom is still directed towards written work. Activities leading to communicative competence, although it is one of the main goals in second-language teaching, are not daily occurrences. Fifty-five percent of the students thought that the materials used in the classroom are very good. Again the number of students who disagree and the undecided are closely related, 24% and 19% respectively. Some students made the comment: "What materials? We don't have any." Fifty-four percent of the students indicated that a lot of different activities take place in the classroom, thirty-six percent disagreed. At this point, it would have been interesting to find out which activities took place. However, it might be said that the quality of these activities were not that challenging, because more than 2/3 of the students (75%) did not think that the time passed

quickly. Six percent made the comment that sometimes it did, sometimes it did not and 14% thought it went quickly. One reason for not finding the time passing quickly in the second-language class might be found in the fact that too much time is spent on textbook types of lesson, as many students' comments at the end of the questionnaire indicated. In order to cover the "curriculum" and teach all the linguistic objectives prescribed, many teachers tend to follow the textbook too closely. Since students stated that they would like to spend more time talking about the things they are interested but which are not in their book (76%), there may be little relevancy for them in what they are taught. Motivation, we have seen in Chapter II, is an important part of second-language learning. It is within the classroom walls, that attitudes (positive or negative) are shaped. If, day after day, the emphasis is on textbook work, it is not surprising that the second-language class is found boring by 62% of the students. Students' response to the statement "we spent too much time on grammar exercices" was somewhat surprising. Forty-four percent of the students agreed with this statement, forty-three percent disagreed that grammar exercises are an important feature of a second-language class. The importance of grammar study is reflected in students' comments such as the following: "I must work on my grammar more", "if I am weak in French, it is because I have difficulty with the verbs!" etc... . Stu-

dents seem to equate grammar drills, and a mark on them with "learning a second-language".

The majority of the students (54%) would like to spend more time practicing the second-language with other students in the class. Furthermore, they thought that teachers do more talking in the second-language than they do (87%). These results give credence to the belief that many second-language classes are too teacher directed (Knop, 1981). Many students would also like to see more time spent in practising speaking the second-language (54%). Most of the interaction in the classroom seems to be done in a vertical way, teacher to student. While this is good for keeping control of the class, it does not allow for the free flow of ideas and extensive practice in a second-language which are parts of communicative competence. On this topic of speaking, it is important to point out that forty percent of the students said that they would not like to see more time spent on practising the second-language. This might be explained by the fact that some teachers insist on having students speaking French during the entire duration of the class. Thus, they do get lots of practice. Some other teachers do not insist on the speaking of the second-language as much, particularly in F.S.L.. Students, in this case, would view the practice of speaking as a special designated time during the class and might not find it long enough. This difference in teacher approach may have resulted in confusion on the part

of the students as how to respond. Furthermore, class size might have been a factor. Some classes had 15 students, other had 32 students. One would expect to find less speaking on an individual basis in the large classrooms.

Regarding second-language culture, some students state that they have been learning about the daily lives of the second-language people (37%). Some indicate (37%) that they have spent quite a bit of time learning about the people who speak French. In both answers, 57% and 53%, respectively disagree. It would have been interesting to find out what constitutes for the students learning about the "daily lives" of the people. In the textbooks used for grade nine students, very little culture is presented explicitly. Usually it becomes available to the students only if it is explained to the student by the teacher. In grade 9, X-French, the cultural component is added; it is the study of Francophones outside Quebec and France. However, for the F.S.L. program while the cultural component is included in the program goals, teachers wishing to approach the study of culture are left on their own to a considerable extent as far as content and material are concerned. In any case, students have not been learning much about the cultural achievements of the French people (72%). Their feelings towards wanting to learn more about the people who use the second-language are mixed. Forty percent stated they would, thirty-two percent disagreed and twenty-eight percent were

undecided. The lack of agreement points out the difficulty in assessing the extent to which teachers bring to life the cultural dimension of the language they are teaching. This lack of awareness and interest in the concept of culture on the part of the students may reflect the extent of individual teachers' commitment to the cultural goal from the early phases of language instruction onward. Even in those cases where time has been spent on the cultural component, awareness of it does not seem to have been communicated effectively to the students. Only twenty-three percent of them mentioned that learning about the people who speak this language is one of the important goals of second-language learning. In contrast, 95% were sure that learning how to speak is one of the important goals of second-language learning.

Table 23 gives a summary of students' degree of satisfaction with different aspects of the language course. In general students expressed satisfaction with the language class. Eleven percent were "very satisfied", fifty-nine percent, "satisfied". This degree of satisfaction decreased strongly, however, for the item regarding the amount of variety. Fifty-two percent expressed dissatisfaction. This tendency has been noted previously. Variety is an important part of motivation, and as such it should be maintained to encourage a stronger desire to learn a second-language. This desire for variety could be met by bringing the outside

world into the classroom. Seventy percent of the students showed dissatisfaction with the fact that they do not have enough opportunities to practice the language in the class as well as outside. Half of the group stated that they were not happy with the French activities provided by the teacher outside classroom time. Three percent added "What activities, we don't have any!" Although the Alberta French community is very small (3% native French speakers) it can provide opportunities for the students to participate in various activities and cultural manifestations in which the community is involved. Thus, the teacher's role might be that of a facilitator in helping to bring this community closer to the students.

Language teachers seem to communicate fairly well with their students on the level of classroom management. The feedback they receive from their teacher regarding their progress in the course is satisfactory for 65% of the students who indicated they were "very satisfied" (8%) or satisfied (57%). They also seem to appreciate the way in which their progress and achievement are evaluated by the teachers (66%). Information relating to the amount of French spoken in class was somewhat surprising. Fifty-one percent expressed great satisfaction and satisfaction vs 45% who expressed dissatisfaction. For a student who does not like to speak French, any amount will be too much, and for the student who likes it, any amount will not be enough. Again class size might have

been a factor: small classes are more conducive to the practice of oral skills.

Table 24 measures the degree of involvement and participation that the students would like to achieve in their different courses. Would they like to become more responsible for what they are learning or do they think that it is the teacher's duty to provide content, method, goals and objectives? Do they want a teacher-oriented instructional process or would they prefer a more student-orientated approach? This question was asked for math or sciences classes and for second-language courses. Thirty-eight percent of the students answered "yes", they would like to see themselves more involved in math or science. Fifty-four percent indicated the same for a second-language. The number of undecided was very high for both questions, 36% and 23% respectively. The proportion of no's were almost the same for both questions; 25% for math/science, and 22% for the second-language. These results can be explained in three ways. Firstly, students are not aware that they can have a say in the instructional process as witnessed by the number of "no opinions". While taking responsibility for one's learning is emphasized in most classrooms, what this means may have been interpreted in different ways by the students. Secondly, second-language is an option, and as a result it is perceived as less important and an area in which students can have a greater say. Language courses

compete with other options for students' enrollment. Thirdly, students accept very readily the fact that core subjects like math and science are not supposed to be fun. They might be boring but they are necessary.

Finally, for this area of concern, Table 25 indicates students' interest in spending more time discussing French culture. A ratio of two to one answered "no"; they were not interested. From previous results on the topic of culture, the results were not surprising. Still, it would have been interesting to find out what concept of culture the students were refusing. Were they rejecting a separate entity dealing with customs and folkore on a once-or-twice a week basis or were they rejecting a more fundamental view of culture, ie. the means by which every other component is expressed? The same question was also asked with the addition of the words "in English." The results were different. Fifty-two percent indicated "yes" which seem to show that it is not culture per se, that students are opposed to, but more the way it is taught or the difficulty inherent in discussing it in a second-language.

Questionaire B does not have any item for this area of concern as the students to whom it is addressed are not enrolled in a second-language course presently.

Students' Rationale for studying a second-language

The rationale given by the students for their enrollment in a second-language class is given in Table 26. The item "for a future job" was marked by 71% of the students. This result is not surprising considering that in most Alberta schools French is the only choice of a second-language. Many parents believe that French is a must, if their chidren are to have a good "career" in Canada. Many "good" students view the study of French as a given and would not dream of taking any other option. In this case it is like a status symbol. If the first item was a perfect example of instrumental motivation, the items "for my enjoyment" (43%) and "because I like to learn languages" (39%) are indicative of a more integrative motivation. "For travelling" was a very popular response and was marked by 59% of the students. Thirty percent of the students mentioned that they were "forced to" register in a second-language class, presumably by their parents. There is the belief by the public at large that learning French is the key to a "successful" and permanent employment and it is unfortunate that 1/3 of the students have to be introduced to a second-language in such a negative way. The only item which could be defined under the heading "integrative motivation" was "I want to learn more about the people." Twenty percent of the students indicated that it was their rationale for studying a sec-

ond-language. Although it ranked last and the number of students who chose it was low, it is worth noticing that there is a group of students who are expecting to learn about the people who speak that language.

Questionaire B, items 7 and 8, deal with the reasons why students, not presently enrolled in a second-language class, have never studied a second-language in school or have dropped out of their language course. Table 27 gives a summary of the reasons why students have never been enrolled in a language course. The reason which was stated by most of the students, 20 out of 37 or 54%, was, "I thought it would be too difficult or not worth the effort." Students' perception of a second-language are fuelled by talking with other students, teachers, parents, and others in the community. The message they often receive is that learning French means memorizing verbs and doing quite a few grammar exercises. It seems to involve a great amount of work for too little in return. Furthermore, in Alberta the support of the French community is minimal and there are few opportunities to speak the language with native speakers inside or outside the classroom. Therefore it becomes irrelevant to the students' life, just an additional subject to carry, and it takes a special commitment on the part of the students to want to learn it, especially if students would rather choose another second-language, one more closely related to their life.

Forty-six percent of the students indicated that they would rather register in a language class other than the French class. German was mentioned by six students (16%), Ukrainian by four (11%), Spanish by four (11%), Latin and Arabic each by one (.03%). The next two items which scored respectively 38% and 35% were "I didn't have enough time for it as I was too busy with other courses I had to or wanted to take" and "I was never convinced of its value although it was suggested to me that I take it." Again, students who do not feel that the second-language is relevant to them or at least useful, will not take it. Furthermore some students already knew a language other than English (14%) and felt there was no need for them to learn a third one. Five percent of the students indicated that none of the schools they attended offered a second-language course, five percent mentioned that some people whose judgement they trust were against it. Regarding this last result, five students specified that one of their teachers was the person who was against it. Three students indicated that their parents were against it and finally four students mentioned friends as telling them not to enroll in a second-language class. The additional reasons that the students wrote were basically the same as above. However, one was repeated four times "I had some trouble with English." This implied that the students either were discouraged from taking on the second-language in order to concentrate more fully on the first

one, or that they themselves prefered to stay with English only.

Table 28 deals with the reasons for the students dropping out of their second-language class. "I thought the second-language class was boring" was checkmarked by 53% of the students, "I did not like the way in which the second-language was taught" by 39%, and "I did not like the second language teacher(s)" by 50%. All of these items point to certain types of problems which can be resumed in one phrase: difficulty in the classroom. When there are difficulties in classroom like conflict with the teacher, lack of variety, too much emphasis on the written work, students' commitment to the study of a second-language falls and if another option appears to be more interesting, students will want to take it (34%). Students' good marks or bad marks also have an influence on their enrollment in the language course. Twenty-one percent of the students mentioned that the fact they had bad marks was a reason for them to drop out of their second-language class. Then "too much homework in French" (11%), "too much homework in general" (18%), and "too many grammar exercises" (13%) were cited. Some students (13%) also felt that they "never got to speak the language", whether they meant within the classroom or outside the classroom, in the community, was not indicated. Peer pressure was not a factor in the decision to drop out of the second-language class. Only 3% of the students checkmarked

the fact that "none of their friends were taking a second-language" as being of importance. The added comments were a repetition of the above with the exception of "I got mixed up with Ukrainian." Furthermore, "it was boring", "I hated it" and "I didn't like the teachers" were mentioned again by 10 students out of 38 in a very forceful manner.

Items Of The Questionaires Not Included In The Four Areas Of Concern

Students' perception, feelings and attitudes toward second-language learning are influenced by a whole range of factors. One of them is the way in which "important" people in their life consider second-language study. This is the reason why the following items have been included. The manner in which students perceive these people to view second-language learning will affect their thinking very significantly. Table 29 gives a summary of the students' perceptions on how five groups of people consider language study. Firstly, the great majority of students enrolled in French (89%) think that their parents find the study of a second-language extremely important or important. More significant may be the fact that the students themselves find the study of a second-language extremely important (36%) or important (48%). This means that students arrive in the classroom with a fairly positive attitude and now it is up

to the teachers to foster more enthusiasm and interest. Fifty-eight percent of the students believe that society as a whole thinks that second-language study is extremely important (12%) and important (46%). Note that the proportions of extremely important is decreasing. It is decreasing even more for the items "your teachers other than second-language teachers" and "your friends." This rating is respectively 11% and 2%. However, the rating "important" is consistent with the others for the item "teachers" (43%). For "friends" it is definitely lower, only 22%. The second last result is somewhat surprising in that quite a few students perceive that their teachers other than the second-language teacher have been somewhat negative towards second-language study. One reason might be that, sometimes, teachers advise students having difficulties in the core subjects not to take a second-language and concentrate on developing the first one instead.

Secondly, non-French students have a different view as to how their parents consider second-language study (Table 30). It was not surprising that only 58% of them thought that their parents perceived it as "important" (31%) or "extremely important" (27%). This is consistent with the ratings for the item "yourself" which indicated that 38% of the students considered the study of a second-language as not so important (17%) or not important at all (21%). Parents' attitudes are reflected in the students' attitudes and both

groups show how parental expectations lead to a high or a low degree of involvement in the second-language, on the part of the students. Furthermore, positive or negative attitudes seem to be cumulative. Note how the proportions of "not important at all" jumped to the 17% and 16% respectively for the items "teachers" and "society as a whole" as well.

Students' Comments

Students' comments, written on the questionnaires as responses to the open-ended items 30 and 31 on questionnaire A and item 14 on questionnaire B, are the only comments analyzed in this study. Oral, informal comments made at the beginning and at the end of the polling session have not been included. Twenty-nine students out of the 129 enrolled in the French classes (22%) chose not to write anything at all. The remainder of the students wrote on a variety of topics ranging from their feelings towards a second-language to some aspect of classroom instruction they agreed or disagreed on. Twenty-six students (20%) explicitly stated that learning a second-language was a very enjoyable experience for them. "It is valuable for enjoyment, for travelling as well as for employment", is but one example of this positive feeling. One student even added that "everybody should learn a second-language" and another wrote that "there

should be more languages offered." The only negative comment, towards second- language study, was expressed by one student, in a very forceful way "Don't force people to take it .... second-language is boring, dumb, useless..." However most of the comments addressed themselves to the topic of classroom management and activities taking place. Dissatisfaction with the teacher was fairly frequent. Ten students stated "Get a better teacher!" and five students said " It would be nice, if it was better taught." Strong feelings were also present in the area of classroom activities and students proposed concrete solutions to prevent boredom which was mentioned as being the main feature of the language class by fifty students (39%). "Let's do more interesting things; we want more variety" was the cry for help of sixty-two students (48%). Some of the different activities mentioned were field trips (5), films (3), speakers (4), debates (2), computer work (4) and games (1). Fifty-five students or 43% also expressed great interest in more oral work and conversation. Fifteen students wished they could learn useful words and five students that the teachers could put students in real-life situations. There was an interesting comment which said "There are not enough people to talk to in French in Edmonton!" As mentioned earlier, exclusive work in the textbook was not found to be acceptable (6). "It is a drag!" said students. Quite a few students found themselves having difficulty to understand what was going on in the classroom and either suggested the use

of more English in the classroom (14) or "better understanding activities" (5). One student even expressed her dismay at the fact that "I have been taking French for nine years and yet I wouldn't be able to have a conversation in French if I wanted to at all; I probably wouldn't understand them!" The area of written work and grammar was very controversial as expected, between students who would like to see less written grammar work (12), less time spent on verbs (3), and who thought "grammar was boring" (5) and on the contrary, students who would like to see "more grammar to communicate better" (15). Feelings on "culture", were also contradictory. "Boring" was the word attached to it. "It's boring to know about geography and history! Culture is very much disliked, even by the teacher" one student wrote. Five students stated very unequivocably "less culture." However some students (3) expressed an interest in knowing more about the people's way of life, "but not the boring stuff we do in culture." One perceptive student wished she "could learn more about kids my own age and things they do" and then she added "geography and history are not culture, are they?"

From these comments, it is clear that, overall, students want the second-language program to be made more interesting, more relevant to their life with a variety of activities and challenges and a strong emphasis on communication skills. As far as the questionnaire itself was concerned,

thirty-one students thought it good and "to the point." Quite a few of them liked the idea of being asked about their feelings toward a school subject (10). Some students expressed the hope that it would help the investigator in her study (5), and teachers (3). Two students were doubtful that it would change anything by saying "what good will it do!" and "why give questionnaires when they change nothing? Everything comes from the Department of Education anyway." The negative comments on the questionnaire were directed to the phrasing of some of the questions (2), the lack of specificity (1) the large amount of questions (2) and the lack of space for comments after each question (2).

The investigator was struck by the amount of positive responses and the hope expressed in them. Hope for change, and hope to be listened to and taken into account. Furthermore students showed enthusiasm and willingness to oblige and be helpful. They had things to say and they said it.

More indifference and more negative feelings were present in the non-French students' responses. Nearly half of them, 35 out of 75 or 47 percent, did not write any comments at all. Some abusive comments were present. Overall, the students were less positive and enthusiastic about second-language study and the idea to be surveyed. Ten students said "I hate French" and thirteen mentioned that they would prefer to learn a language other than French. Strong feelings

against anything different from English were present in the comments "Frogs and foreigners should go home" (3). However, some positive comments were expressed by the students who thought that second-languages were important and said "I would love to learn one" (11). The reasons, which were given for not liking it ranged from the teacher, "the teacher made it boring", "I want a decent teacher" (4); to the time involved, "it takes too long to understand and speak it well" (2); to the instruction, "I would like to take it, if it was taught differently' (6), "it cannot be taught well at school" (2); and to the lack of perceived usefulness, "it is not necessary now", "with English, I don't need another language" (2).

As far as the questionnaire itself was concerned, very few students said anything about it (16 or 21%). They either mentioned that it was good (5), useful (3) or stated that it was a waste of time (4). The kindest comments came from the students, who wrote respectively, "it is nice that somebody cares" and "it filled my head with new thoughts and ideas." That last comment was made, in various ways, by three students.

Chapter Four has discussed the findings of the questionnaires completed by students currently enrolled in French programs and by those who are not enrolled in them. Chapter Five will summarize the findings, discuss implications for

second-language programs, and suggest further research in the area.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

SUMMARY

The purpose of the study was to examine the needs and interests of the learners and their rationales for studying a second-language. Answers were sought to the following questions: 1) Who are the second-language learners?, 2) what are their general attitudes toward second-language learning?, 3) what language skills are they interested in?, 4) what are their feelings about different aspects of the instructional process?, 5) what are their rationales for studying a second-language?.

Two hundred and four junior high school students enrolled in nine grade nine classes participated in the survey. These students were divided into two groups. The first group of students included students registered in two French programs: French-as-a-second-language (F.S.L.) and Extended French (X-French). The second group was comprised of students not currently enrolled in a second-language class (non-French).

The instruments used in the study were two questionnaires (A and B) developed by the investigator from Leon A. Jakobovits' own questionnaires: "A Relevant Curriculum, An

Instrument for Polling Student Opinion" (1970). The thirty-one items on questionnaire A and the fourteen items on questionnaire B were designed to obtain information relating to the five questions or areas of concern. Subsequent to the survey taking place, the data was tabulated using frequency counts and proportions for each item, and analyzed.

The following major conclusions can be drawn from this study:

1. Students' language background is varied.

2. Students' language background is not a factor in deciding whether to register or not in a second-language class.

3. Students' feelings towards second-language study mirror very closely that of their parents.

4. Students' general feelings towards second-language learning are fairly positive. Extremely negative feelings ings did not surface.

5. Students are committed to the study of a second-language if they were the ones who made the choice. The concept of choice is very important.

6. There is fairly strong agreement among students that second-languages other than French should be offered- at the Junior High level.

7. Students seem to harbour contradictory feelings regarding the study of culture. They are unsure of what it is exactly and what it entails.

8. Students would rather study culture in its anthropological sense rather than its fine arts sense.

9. Students have many criticisms regarding the second-language class and the instruction they receive especially in the area of oral communication.

10. Students stress the lack of variety and relevancy of their classes; "boring" is a term used frequently.

11. Speaking and reading are the skills that the majority of students are interested in.

12. Students view proper grammar and pronunciation as important tools for communication.

13. Students, at the same time, would like to see less emphasis put on grammar and written work.

14. Students have a very strong tendency to divorce the linguistic skills from the cultural component. Language-as-a-code is strongly emphasized over lanuage-in-culture.

15. Students are learning a second-language for future job consideration, for travelling and for their own enjoyment.

16. The majority of second-language learners are girls.

Implications

The results of this study have implications in four areas; 1) classroom interaction, 2) communication skills, 3) cultural understanding, 4) curriculum changes.

Discussion

Many teachers, if not all of them, believe in the ideal that schools should help students develop their potential, have a better self-image and relate well to peers. Reality shows that these beliefs are largely a myth. Many students in second-language classrooms are expressing dissatisfaction; quite a few are "turned off." This study supports this

statement in indicating that students, although they arrive in the second-language class, with a fairly positive outlook on second-language study, have a tendency to lose that level of satisfaction. This does not have to occur. Teaching is essentially a human interaction process involving both the students and the teacher. Some attempt must be made to consider the needs of the students if the teacher is to achieve success. It appears that students want to learn a second-language for travelling, for their enjoyment and for future job considerations. They also have indicated that they want to "communicate" in the second-language with their peers and the community of native speakers as well as with their teacher. Furthermore, they have stated very clearly that they want more variety in their class and more relevancy. They want teachers who are dynamic and not bound to a textbook. They wish to be heard, listened to and have their choices taken into consideration. They expect to be interested and challenged with materials which make sense to them. As a result more attention must be paid to the creation of an environment which truly reflect the teacher's belief that the social and emotional development of the students is his primary responsibility. One way to achieve this objective is for the teacher to combine the second-language taught with the feelings, emotions and lives of the students.

It is Robert Louis Stevenson who has said that "All speech is a dead language, until it finds a willing listener." For many students, it seems that this term "dead language" would characterize perfectly what is happening in their classes. Their day-to-day activities appear to consist largely of mechanistic, sometimes manipulative and often artificial dialogues devised for oral practice. True communication this is not. If we hope to achieve genuine communication as well as teach our students "a living language", we must provide them with the reason for listening and the desire to talk. True communication is an invitation to exchange new ideas or information. It is an invitation to use language in a real-life context. It means that students are to initiate as well as respond to information and ideas, not just listen and respond. To this end teachers must provide activities which are more meaningful and realistic. This implies that communication in the classroom is seen as an authentic, direct experience which is deliberately and systematically built into the curriculum at a very early stage of language learning. It is not a late stage in practice which follows language instruction, it <u>is</u> an integral part of instruction. This of course presupposes that second-langugage teachers do not see themselves as teachers of language - language meaning grammar and vocabulary - but that they emphasize content over form. It is commonly accepted that accuracy in the formal grammatical tasks does not predict performance on the informal-communicative tasks. In

other words, the rules that the students learn in the course of instruction are not necessarily applied in situations of actual language use. Teaching about the target language is not effective and leads to boredom which in turn affects the ability of the student to focus on the message. Students in this study, have complained that teachers do not provide enough "useful" sentences that they could use in real life situations. They also have mentioned their dissatisfacton with the opportunities (outside or inside the classroom) that they have to practice the language. Thus it is the responsibility of the teachers to create a rich and varied learning environment in the second-language which is also comprehensible to the student. One of the elements of frustration that many students encounter in their language class is their lack of understanding of what is going on in the classroom. To remedy this, quite a few students suggested that the teacher should speak English more. Obviously more English is not the solution! But focusing on understanding by providing listening activities that allow "constructive silence" might be the solution. One of the suggestions might be to delay oral practice at the beginning of the course to better prepare the students for the goal of communication.

The third area in which the results of this study have implications is cultural understanding. Very little appears to be done in this area. Students have rated "knowing about

the people who speak the second-language" last, in their list of priorities. However quite a few have expressed an interest in knowing more about the second-language people, their values, attitudes and customs. It is the teacher's responsibility to develop this cultural understanding. More attention must be paid to the fact that true cultural understanding cannot be achieved only through the study of the language. Oral comprehension does not lead to cultural awareness. Teaching culture is not something to be added to the regular program if time permits because language and culture are intertwined. The two concepts cannot be separated and both of them are essential to effective communication. Language is only part of the whole message and is dependent upon the cultural context where it takes place. Awareness of this on the part of the teacher might be rendered more effective by giving all prospective teachers training in cultural awareness. Then courses, workshops and conferences outlining the cultural patterns, daily life activities and thoughts characteristic of the group of people whose language is being taught could be offered on a regular basis in order for the teachers to present an up-to-date portrayal of that culture. Furthermore the French Curriculum guide should clarify the cultural objectives so as to allow teachers to gain a better understanding of the language-culture relationship.

If we want teachers to resolve the dilemma in the classroom between language as a logically organized body of content and language as a vehicle for the communication of ideas, feeling, information and the self, curricular changes must be made. We mentioned earlier that truer communication was viewed as one of the very important implications of this study, but communication with whom? With native speakers? Or with others who have learned it as a second-language? The answers to these questions lead to a re-definition of communication to take into account the situation of language learning in classrooms and the stated goals of the students. This, in turn, leads to the development of a curriculum rationale which entails radical questioning of what is second-language learning and teaching. This study shows that while some students are interested in near-native ability in order to function in conversations with native speakers, others want to understand the spoken words for oral lectures and the written words from textbooks for university requirements and various demands from a future job. The same type of mastery might not be required in the future for everyone, when more and more people are learning a second-language for uses far removed from its cultural context. Communication must be tailored to the "who", "where", "whom" and "why". Consideration, then, should be given to the design of a curriculum which does not stress "incremental learning and mastery learning" (Crawford-Lange, 1982:87). Furthermore, this curriculum should address the question of language and its

nature. If language is viewed as being just composed of conditioned responses, then the emphasis will be on conditioned responses, drills and repetitions. If language is considered as a linguistic code, then rules are going to be stressed, verb paradigms and syntax as well. However if language is presented as the medium by which words affect the mind of those who use them, then second-language teaching will take on a special significance and the language classroom will be a better place to be, a place of encounter.

Suggestions for Further Research

Different questions were raised in the course of this study. An attempt was made to answer them. However more research is needed in the following areas if second-language classrooms are to be more successful.

1. Evaluation procedures must be evaluated to determine if they are consistent with the expressed goals and to assess whether goals are being achieved in the course.

2. Similar research to the present study could be conducted with older or younger students. These people might have different feelings and perceptions associated with the

length of their exposure to a second-language in the classroom.

3. A similar study could be conducted with students who are studying a second-language other than French in order to determine the similarities or differences of attitudes and feelings.

4. A group of students could be selected across the Province in a variety of school settings prior to their introduction to a second-language. These should be followed through to the point which they either graduate or drop out to assess development of their attitudes.

5. The real causes of dissatisfaction of the students with their second-language course should be isolated and analyzed in depth.

6. A study should be done to assess the correlation between progress in the course and general attitudes towards a second-language.

7. Appropriate and flexible goals of second-language based on students' needs should be selected and discussed.

8. The elements which make a second-language class, a "good" (successful) class should be researched.

9. There is a need to reassess the fundamental values and assumptions underlying second-language study in order to bring forth the dimension of language which has been too often ignored - the vehicle for the communication of ideas, feelings, and the self.

TABLES

Table 1

Information On The Students Enrolled In A Second-Language Course

Frequencies and Proportions

Females		83	(.64)
Males		46	(.36)
Age:	13 years	3	(.02)
	14 years	89	(.69)
	15 years	35	(.27)
	16 years	2	(.02)

Table 2

Information On The Students Enrolled In an Option Other Than a Second-Language Course

Frequencies and Proportions

Females		37	(.49)
Males		38	(.51)
Age:	13 years	1	(.01)
	14 years	43	(.57)
	15 years	25	(.33)
	16 years	6	(.08)

* NOTE - Total number in first group = 129
- Total number in second group = 75
- Where the total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to rounding off.

Table 3

Language Background of
The Students Enrolled In a Second-Language Class
Frequencies and Proportions

Language(s), spoken by the parents, other than English	100	(.78)
Language(s) other than English and/or French, spoken by the students	30	(.23)
Language(s), spoken at home, other than English	39	(.30)

Table 4

Students' Knowledge Of Others Speaking A
Second-Language

	Frequencies and Proportions	
	YES	NO
Do the students personally know of anyone who can speak a language other than English?	111 (.86)	18 (.14)

*Note - Total number in sample = 129

Table 5

Students' Perceptions Of Their Performance

In French

Frequencies and Proportions

Excellent	39	(.30)
Very Good	37	(.29)
Good	44	(.34)
Poor	9	(.07)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 129

Table 6

Background Of The Students Not

Enrolled In A Second Language Class

	Frequencies and Proportions	
Students who have never been enrolled in a second-language class.	37	(.49)
Students who have completed one or many grades in a second-language.	35	(.47)

	YES	NO
Have students ever studied a language other than English outside school?	22 (.29)	53 (.71)
Does the student know personally someone who can speak a language other than English?	70 (.93)	5 (.07)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 75
- Where total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy is due to omissions (questions not answered).

Table 7

Second-Language Students' Feelings Towards The Study Of A Second-Language

Frequencies and Proportions

I like French very much	44	(.34)
I like French a bit	66	(.51)
I do not like French at all	8	(.06)
No opinion	11	(.09)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 129

Table 8

Second-Language Students' Commitment To The Study Of A Second-Language And Its Culture

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
I think that everybody should study a second-language	56 (.43)	46 (.36)	27 (.21)
I think that everybody should study about other countries' culture	79 (.61)	34 (.26)	16 (.12)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 129
- Where the total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to rounding off.

Table 9

Students' Commitment To The Study

Of a Second- Language

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO	UNDECIDED
I would consider going to another country or another part of this country to increase my skills in the use of a second-language	87 (.67)	18 (.14)	24 (.19)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 129

Table 10

Students' Commitment To The Study Of

A Second Language

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
If I had to stay in another country, I would make a great effort to learn the language spoken there even if I could get along in English	98 (.76)	13 (.10)	18 (.14)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 129

Table 11

Students' Enjoyment Of The Study

Of A Second Language

Frequencies and Proportions

	VERY ENJOYABLE	SLIGHTLY ENJOYABLE	NOT ENJOYABLE	UNDECIDED
I find the study of a second language...	36 (.28)	60 (.47)	22 (.17)	9 (.07)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 129
- Where the total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to omissions.

Table 12

Students' Attitude Towards The Learning Of

A Second Language Other Than French

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO
I wish I could learn a second-language other than French in school	94 (.73)	34 (.26)

* Note - Total number in sample = 129
- Where the total number does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to omissions.

Table 13

Students' Assessment Of The Benefits

Associated With Learning A Second Language

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
The time I have spent in studying a second-language has been beneficial to me	84 (.65)	12 (.09)	33 (.26)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 129

Table 14

Non-French Students' Commitment To The Study Of

A Second Language

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
I would consider going to another country to acquire the skills in the use of a second-language	35 (.47)	13 (.17)	27 (.36)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 75

Table 15

Students' Attitude Towards

Various Language Activities

Frequencies and Proportions

	GREAT INTEREST	SOME INTEREST	VERY LITTLE INTEREST
Everyday conversation with native speakers of French	66 (.51)	54 (.42)	9 (.07)
To listen to news broadcasts in French	24 (.19)	44 (.34)	61 (.47)
To enjoy films in French	44 (.34)	60 (.47)	25 (.19)
To read in French	61 (.47)	54 (.42)	14 (.11)
To understand the customs and the way of life of the people who speak French	34 (.26)	62 (.48)	33 (.26)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 129

Table 16

Students' Attitude Towards The Acquisition Of Native-Like Fluency

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO
I wish I could speak a second-language like a native speaker	117 (.91)	10 (.08)

Table 17

Students' Attitude Towards The Relationship Between The Acquisition Of Correct Pronunciation/Grammar And Communication

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO	NO OPINION
I think it is necessary to speak a language correctly in order to be able to communicate in that language	84 (.65)	38 (.29)	6 (.05)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 129
- Where the total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to omissions.

Table 18

Students' Attitude Towards The Use Of The French Language

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO	CAN'T SAY
I would like to use the French language more to express my thoughts even if it meant speaking incorrectly	41 (.32)	31 (.24)	57 (.44)

*NOTE - Total number in sample = 129

Table 19

Non-French Students' Attitude Towards Various Language Activities

Frequencies and Proportions

	GREAT INTEREST	SOME INTEREST	VERY LITTLE INTEREST	NO INTEREST
Everyday conversation with speakers	30 (.40)	26 (.35)	11 (.15)	8 (.10)
To listen to the radio and watch T.V. in that language	10 (.13)	30 (.40)	19 (.25)	16 (.21)
To read in that language	18 (.24)	20 (.27)	24 (.32)	13 (.17)
To write letters in that language	24 (.32)	18 (.24)	17 (.23)	16 (.21)
To understand the way of life of the people speaking that language	20 (.27)	12 (.16)	24 (.32)	19 (.25)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 75
- Where the total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to rounding off.

Table 20

Non-French Students' Interest In The

Study Of A Second-Language Culture

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO	MAYBE
I would have taken a second-language course in which almost all the time had been spent on the study of the second-language culture	9 (.12)	27 (.36)	39 (.52)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 75

Table 21

Non-French Students' Definition Of Knowing A Second Language

	Frequencies	and Proportions
To speak it perfectly well	47	(.63)
To speak it even if one makes lots of mistakes	21	(.28)
To read it and write it reasonably well	59	(.79)
To understand what people tell you in that language	61	(.81)
To understand the way of life of the people who speak that language	26	(.35)
To know all the major works of art of the people speaking that language	11	(.15)
To know the grammar well	44	(.61)
To have a perfect "accent" in that language	22	(.29)
To have lived in the country where the people speak that language for a period of time	24	(.32)

* NOTE - Total number in sample = 75

Table 22

Students' Attitude Towards Different Aspects Of Their Second-Language Class

Frequencies and Proportions

	I AGREE	I DON'T AGREE	I DON'T KNOW
The teacher goes too fast	29 (.22)	91 (.71)	9 (.07)
The sentences we are learning are useful sentences	73 (.57)	34 (.26)	22 (.17)
Learning how to pronounce the second-language accurately is very important	113 (.88)	3 (.02)	13 (.10)
The second-language course is very good to learn how to write it	93 (.72)	16 (.12)	20 (.16)
The materials used are very good	71 (.55)	31 (.24)	25 (.19)
Time seems to pass very quickly	18 (.14)	97 (.75)	6 (.04)
We have a lot of different activities	69 (.54)	47 (.36)	13 (.10)
I'd like to practice the second-language with others in my class more often	70 (.54)	36 (.28)	23 (.18)
We spend too much time on grammar exercises	57 (.44)	55 (.43)	16 (.12)
I'd like to spend more time talking about the things that we are interested in	98 (.76)	12 (.09)	19 (.15)

We don't have enough time to practice speaking	70 (.54)	52 (.40)	7 (.06)
We do more talking in the second-language than the teacher does	6 (.05)	112 (.87)	11 (.09)
We learn too much material everyday	20 (.16)	93 (.72)	16 (.12)
We spend quite a bit of time learning about the people who speak the second-language	48 (.37)	69 (.53)	11 (.09)
We should learn about the people who speak the second-language	52 (.40)	41 (.32)	36 (.28)
We have been learning about the daily lives of the second-language people	48 (.37)	74 (.57)	6 (.05)
We have been learning about the achievements of the second-language people	30 (.23)	93 (.72)	6 (.05)
One of the most important goals is to learn how to speak	122 (.95)	6 (.05)	1 (.01)
One of the most important goals is to learn about the people who speak the language	30 (.23)	71 (.55)	27 (.21)
My second-language class is boring	80 (.62)	29 (.22)	14 (.11)

*NOTE - Total number in sample = 129
- Where the total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to omissions or rounding

Table 23

Students' Degree of Satisfaction Towards Different Aspects Of The Language Course

Frequencies and Proportions

	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NO OPINION
French class in general	14 (.11)	76 (.59)	31 (.24)	8 (.06)
Textbooks used	9 (.07)	81 (.63)	29 (.22)	10 (.08)
Amount of variety in French class class	10 (.08)	48 (.37)	67 (.52)	4 (.03)
The outside opportunities you have had to practice the language.	5 (.04)	18 (.14)	90 (.70)	16 (.12)
Information you received from your teacher	10 (.08)	73 (.57)	36 (.28)	10 (.08)
The way your progress and achievement are evaluated	16 (.12)	70 (.54)	27 (.21)	16 (.12)
The amount of French spoken in class	10 (.08)	55 (.43)	58 (.45)	4 (.03)
The activities the teacher provides in French outside classroom hours.	5 (.04)	24 (.19)	65 (.50)	31 (.24)

*Note - Total number in sample = 129.
- Where total propotion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to omissions or rounding.

Table 24

Students'Degree of Involvement In Different Courses

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO	NO OPINION
Do you think students should have a greater say in the method and content of courses in math or science	49 (.38)	32 (.25)	47 (.36)
Do you think that students should have a greater say in the method and content of second-language courses?	70 (.54)	28 (.22)	30 (.23)

*Note - Total number in sample = 129
- Where total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy is due to omissions.

Table 25

Students' Feelings Towards The

Study Of Culture

Frequencies and Proportions

	YES	NO
Would you like to spend more time in the French language class discussing the French culture.	42 (.33)	85 (.66)

	YES	NO	NO OPINION
...if the discussions were in English	67 (.52)	37 (.29)	25 (.19)

*Note - Total number in sample = 129
- When total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to omissions.

Table 26

Students' Rationale For Studying

A Second Language

	Frequencies and Proportions	
For one's enjoyment	56	(.43)
For a future job	92	(.71)
For travelling	76	(.59)
Because one is "forced" to	39	(.30)
Because one likes learning languages	50	(.39)
Because one wants to learn more about the people who speak this language	26	(.20)

*Note - Total number in sample = 129

Table 27

Non-French Students' Rationale For

Never Enrolling In A Language Class

	Frequencies and Proportions	
None of the schools I attended offered a second-language	2	(.05)
I already know a language other than English	5	(.14)
Noone told me to take a second-language	6	(.16)
I was never convinced of the value of a second-language	13	(.35)
I did not have enough time to take a second-language	14	(.38)
I thought it would be too difficult or not worth the effort	20	(.54)
The second-language I wanted to take was not offered in my school	17	(.46)
People whose judgement I trust were against it.	2	(.05)

*Note - Total number in sample = 37

Table 28

Non-French Students' Rationale For Dropping Out Of A Second-Language Course

	Frequencies and Proportions	
I wanted to take another course	13	(.34)
I had too much homework in French	4	(.11)
I had too much homework overall	7	(.18)
None of my friends were taking a second-language	1	(.03)
I did not like the second-language teacher(s)	19	(.50)
I did not like the way in which it was taught	15	(.39)
I thought it was boring	20	(.53)
I always got bad marks	8	(.21)
I had too many grammar exercises to do	5	(.13)
I never got to speak the language	5	(.13)

*Note - Total number in sample = 38

Table 29

Students' Perceptions On How Various People Consider Second-Language Study

Frequencies and Proportions

	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NOT SO IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL
Your parents	64 (.50)	50 (.39)	13 (.10)	1 (.01)
Your friends	3 (.02)	29 (.22)	59 (.46)	37 (.29)
Your teachers other than the second-language teacher	14 (.11)	56 (.43)	53 (.41)	5 (.04)
Canadians in general	15 (.12)	59 (.46)	50 (.39)	5 (.04)
Yourself	46 (.36)	62 (.48)	14 (.11)	7 (.05)

*NOTE - Total number in sample = 129
- Where the total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to omissions or rounding.

Table 30

Non-French Students' Perceptions On How Various People Consider Second-Language Study

Frequencies and Proportions

	EXTREMELY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NOT SO IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL
Your parents	20 (.27)	23 (.31)	27 (.36)	5 (.06)
Your friends	2 (.03)	17 (.23)	33 (.44)	21 (.28)
Your teachers other than the second-language teacher	11 (.15)	33 (.44)	17 (.23)	13 (.17)
Canadians in general	18 (.24)	28 (.37)	16 (.21)	12 (.16)
Yourself	22 (.29)	23 (.31)	13 (.17)	16 (.21)

*Note - Total number in sample = 75
- When the total proportion does not add up to 100%, the discrepancy exists due to omissions.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire A

To The Student

This is not a test. Your marks will in no way be affected by your answers and you need not put your name on this form. This questionnaire has been designed to find out from you how students feel about modern language study. In order to provide a second language curriculum of the highest quality, we need to know your opinion on this matter. This is a chance to "tell it like it is" in your own mind.

Please, fill out the enclosed questionnaire as completely as possible. If you wish to add further comments please feel free to write on the back of any of the pages.

Thank you very much for your help.

Part A

Please answer all questions.

1. Male __ Female __ (Please check one)

2. Age years ____ months ____

3. Name of school _____

4. Name of program: Extended French ____
(please check one) F. S. L. ____

5. I have completed the following courses (grades) in French:
(please check all the ones that apply to you)

French grade four ___ French grade seven ___
French grade five ___ French grade eight ___
French grade six ___
Other courses in French _____

6. Please list any language or languages which either of your parents speak beside English. _____

7. Can you speak another language beside English and/or French?

Yes ___ No ___
If yes, which one(s)? _____

8. What language or languages are used in your home besides English and/or French? _____

9. Do you personally know anyone (other than your language teacher) who can speak a language other than English?

Yes ____ No ____

10. During most of my past French courses my marks were (please check one):

excellent ___ very good ___
good ___ poor ___

11. On the whole I like French (please check one)

very much ___ a bit ___
not at all ___ no opinion ___

Part B

12. You are going to be asked for your opinion about different topics related to second language study. Show to what extent you are interested in each of them by circling one of the following three numbers as follows:

    3 - great interest
    2 - some interest
    1 - very little interest

    a. being able to have an everyday conversation with native speakers of French

        3 2 1

    b. being able to listen to news broadcasts in French

        3 2 1

    c. being able to enjoy films in French

        3 2 1

    d. being able to read in French (newspapers, magazines, comics)

        3 2 1

    e. being able to understand the customs and the way of life of the people who speak French

        3 2 1

13. Do you think that everybody should study a second language?

    Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

14. Do you think that everybody should study about other countries' culture?

    Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

15. For what purposes are you learning the second language? (Please check any applicable answers):

    For your enjoyment ___
    For a future job ___
    For travelling ___
    You are "forced to" ___
    You like learning languages ___
    You want to learn more about the people who speak this language ___

Any others? _____

16. In your judgement, to what extent do the following people consider a second language important? In each case, circle one of the four numbers:

    4 - Extremely important
    3 - Important
    2 - Not so important
    1 - Not important at all

    a. your parents

    4 3 2 1

    b. your friends

    4 3 2 1

    c. your teachers other than the second language teacher

    4 3 2 1

    d. Canadians in general

    4 3 2 1

    e. yourself

    4 3 2 1

17. Would you consider going to another country or another part of this country to increase your skills in the use of a second language?

    Yes ___ No ___ Undecided ___

18. How enjoyable do you find the study of a second language?

    Very enjoyable ____ Slightly enjoyable ____
    Not enjoyable ___ Undecided ___
    Why? _____
    _____

19. Do you wish you could speak a second language like a native speaker?

    Yes ___ No ___

20. Do you wish you could learn a second language other than French in school?

    Yes ___ No ___
    If "yes," which one? _____

21. If you had to stay in another country for an long time, would you make a great effort to learn the language spoken there even if you could get along in English?

    Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

22. Would you say that the time you have spent in studying a second language has been beneficial to you?

    Yes ___ No ___ Not sure ___

23. Here are some comments that students make about their second language course. You may or may not agree with them. To show how you feel about each comment read the sentence, then circle one of the three numbers:

    3 - You agree with the sentence
    2 - You don't agree
    1 - You don't know

    a. the teacher goes too fast for me to keep up:

       3 2 1

    b. the sentences that we are learning are the kind of sentence that will be useful in a conversation with a native person of the second language.

       3 2 1

    c. learning how to pronounce the second language accurately is very important:

       3 2 1

    d. our second language course is very good for helping us learn how to write it:

       3 2 1

    e. the materials our teacher uses (such as books, tapes, pictures) are very good:

       3 2 1

    f. time seems to pass very quickly in our second language class:

       3 2 1

    g. we have a lot of different activities in our second language class:

       3 2 1

h. I'd like to be able to practice the second language with the others in my class more often:

3 2 1

i. we spend too much time on grammar exercises:

3 2 1

j. I'd like to spend more time talking about the things that we are interested in, but which aren't in our second language book:

3 2 1

k. we don't have enough time in class to practise speaking the second language:

3 2 1

l. we do more talking in the second language than the teacher does:

3 2 1

m. we learn too much material everyday:

3 2 1

n. we spend quite a bit of time learning about the people who speak the second language:

3 2 1

o. we should learn about the people who use the second language:

3 2 1

p. we have been learning about the daily lives of the second language people:

3 2 1

q. we have been learning about the literature, architecture, scientific achievements of the second language people:

3 2 1

r. one of the most important goals of the second language study is to learn how to speak:

3 2 1

s. one of the most important goals of second language study is to learn about the people who speak this language:

3 2 1

t. my second language class is very boring:

3 2 1

24. Indicate the extent to which you are satisfied with each of the following aspects of your second language course by circling one of the four numbers as follows:

4 - very satisfied
3 - satisfied
2 - dissatisfied
1 - no opinion

a. the french class in general

4 3 2 1

b. the textbooks you use:

4 3 2 1

c. the amount of variety in the French class

4 3 2 1

d. the outside opportunities you have to practice the language (e.g., conversing with native speakers, listening to radio broadcasts, reading magazines, travel, etc.,):

4 3 2 1

e. the information you received from your teacher as to how you are progressing in the language course:

4 3 2 1

f. the way your progress and achievement are evaluated (e.g., grades):

4 3 2 1

g. the amount of French spoken in class:

4 3 2 1

h. the activities that the teacher provides in French outside regular classroom hours

4 3 2 1

25. Would you like to be able to use the french language more to express your thoughts even if it meant speaking incorrectly?

Yes ___ No ___ Can't say ___

26. Do you think students should have a greater say in the content and method of courses in mathematics or science?

Yes ___ No ___ No opinion ___

27. Do you think it's necessary to be able to speak a language correctly (pronunciation, grammar) in order to be able to communicate in that language?

Yes ___ No ___ No opinion ___

28. Do you think students should have a greater say in the content and method of second language courses?

Yes ___ No ___ No opinion ___

29. Would you like to spend more time in the French language class discussing the French culture.

Yes ___ No ___

Would you like to discuss the French culture in English?

Yes ___ No ___ No opinion ___

30. How would you change the second language program to help students accomplish more?

_____
_____
_____
_____

31. Please add any comments you wish to make about second language studies or about this questionnaire:

About second languages	About this questionnaire

Appendix B

Questionnaire B

To the Student

This questionnaire is intended for students who are not enrolled in a second language class. This is not a test. Your grades will in no way be affected by your answers and you need not put your name on this form. You are being asked to fill this questionnaire to help second language educators provide a better curriculum.

Please, fill out the enclosed questionnaire as completey and honestly as possible. This is your chance to "tell it like it is" in your own mind. Feel free to add any comments you wish on the back of any of the pages.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Part A

1. Male ___ Female ___ (Please check one)

2. Age: years ___ months ___

3. Name of school _____

4. I have completed the following grades in French or in any other language: (Please check all that apply to you)

   Grade four ___
   Grade five ___
   Grade six ___
   Grade seven ___
   Grade eight ___
   None ___
   Other grades ___

5. Have you ever studied a language other than English outside school?

   Yes ____ No ____

6. Do you personally know anyone (other than a second language teacher) who can speak a language other than English?

   Yes ___ No ____

   If "yes," please specify your relationhip to that person (e.g., grandfather, friend, neighbor):_____

Part B

If you have never studied a second language in school, answer question 7, and then go directly to question 9 and continue. If you have dropped out of your second language class do not answer question 7, go directly to question 8 and continue.

7. What are the reasons you have never studied a second language in school? Check all of the reasons that apply to you:

   a. None of the schools I attended offered a second language course. _____

   b. I already know a language other than English, so there was no need to study one in school. ____

   c. No one ever told me to take a second language. ____

   d. It was suggested to me that I take a second language but I was never convinced of its value. ____

   e. There was not enough time to take a second language, as I was busy with too many other courses I had to or wanted to take. ____

   f. I thought a second language course would be too hard, or, in any case, would not be worth the effort: ____

   g. I wanted to take a second language but the one I was interested in was not offered in my school. ____
   If so, which language was it? ____

   h. People whose judgement I trust were against it. ____
   If so, specify your relationship to those persons (e.g. father, friend, teacher). _____

   i. Any other reasons you might like to specify? _____
   _____

8. What are the reasons for you dropping out of your second language class? Check all reasons that apply to you.

   a. I wanted to take another course. ____

   b. I had too much homework to do in French. ____

c. The second language course plus my other courses amounted to too much work. ____

d. None of my friends were taking a second language. ____

e. I did not like the second language teacher(s). ____

f. I did not like the way in which the second language was taught in my school. ____

g. I thought the second language class was boring. ____

h. I always got bad marks. ____

i. There were too many grammar exercises to do. ____

j. I never got to speak the language. ____

k. Others _____

9. The following are various skills that a second language course can emphasize. Assuming that one day you might wish to take a second language course, which of these skills would you be interested in learning? Rate each of them by circling one of the four numbers as follows:

4 - Great interest
3 - Some interest
2 - Very little interest
1 - No interest

a. being able to engage in an everyday conversation with native speakers of that language:

4 3 2 1

b. being able to listen to the radio and watch T.V. in that language:

4 3 2 1

c. being able to read in that language (newspapers, magazines,comics)

4 3 2 1

d. being able to write letters in that language for various purposes (e.g., business, social):

4 3 2 1

e. being able to understand the way of life of the people speaking that language (e.g., customs, folklore, thoughts, beliefs):

4 3 2 1

10. If a special second language course had been available in which almost all the time had spent on the study of the second language culture (way of life) in English, would you have taken it?

Yes ____ No ____ Maybe ____

11. In your judgement, to what extent do the following people consider second language study important? In each case, circle one of the four numbers:

4 - extremely important
3 - important
2 - not so important
1 - not important at all

a. your parents:

4 3 2 1

b. your friends:

4 3 2 1

c. your teachers other than second language teachers:

4 3 2 1

d. Canadian society as a whole:

4 3 2 1

e. yourself:

4 3 2 1

12. Would you consider going to another country to acquire the skills in the use of a second language?

Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

13. For you, what does it mean "to know" a second language? Check all the answers that apply.

a. to be able to speak it perfectly well ____

b. to be able to speak it even if you make lots of mistakes ____

c. to be able to read it and write it reasonably well ____

d. to be able to understand what people tell you in that language ____

e. to be able to understand the way of life of the people who speak that language, reasonably well ____

f. to be able to tell all the major works of art of the people speaking that language (novels, music, paintings, etc.,) ____

g. to know the grammar of that language well ____

h. to have a perfect "accent" in that language ____

i. to have lived in the country where the people speak that language for a period of time ____

j. any other aspects? ____

14. Please add any comments you wish to make about second languages or about this questionnaire.

About second languages	About this questionnaire

Thank you very much.